

50TH ISSUE SPECTACULAR

50 PLAYSTATION GAMES YOU SHOULD HAVE PLAYED • CELEBRATE
6 YEARS OF PLAYSTATION • 50 PEOPLE WHO CHANGED YOUR WORLD

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA

November 2001
ISSUE 50



OFFICIAL U.S. PlayStation MAGAZINE

Metal Gear Solid 2

Only one month to go!
Find out more of Snake's secrets

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GRAND THEFT AUTO 3

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The reasons why you
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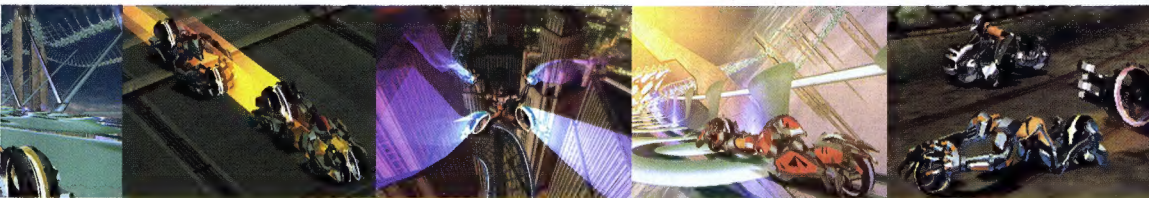
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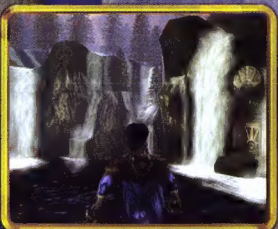


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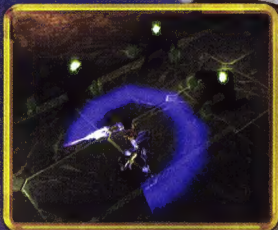
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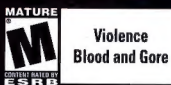
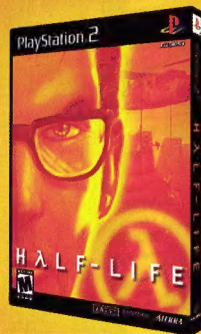
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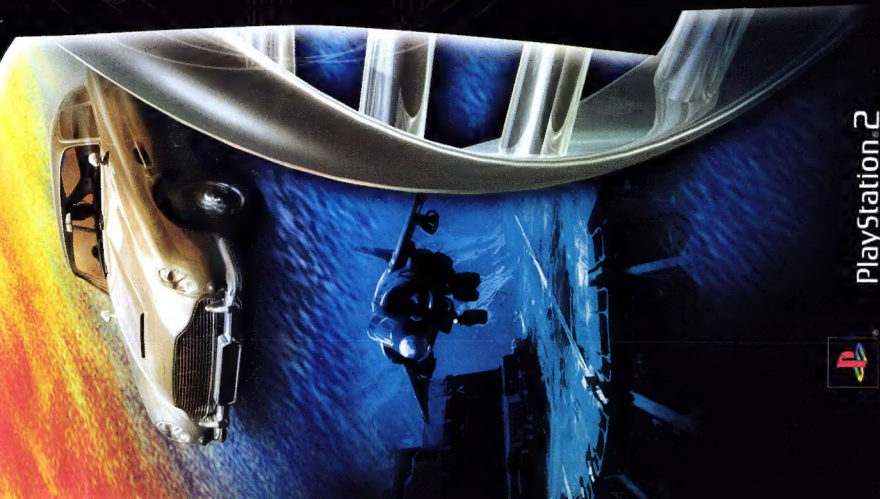
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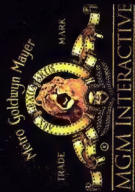
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 You may have seen our cover artist's work before. He produced the album cover art for *Massive Attack V Mad Professor* and has also illustrated for *GQ*, *Time* and other mags. He's currently designing characters for Disney.



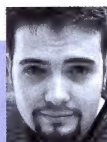
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SHUJI KOBAYASHI
 Over the years, Shuji has photographed tons of celebrities and made them look either scary, or cool, or both. He also does a damn fine job with members of the video game community, as ably illustrated this month.
www.7stdesign.com/shuji

CENSORED
 your Mom wouldn't want you talking to this guy



John Davison
Editor in Chief

Car jacking, Italian opera and gangsta rap

We bring you all this, and more, just from our experiences with *Grand Theft Auto III* this month. If you've ever thought that games are just kid stuff, this is certainly proof that the new wave of game design is aiming fairly and squarely at the adult game. *GTA3* earns its M rating from the ESRB with aplomb, and rightly so. It will no doubt draw attention from "observers" and be declared a disgrace in the news as something that glamorizes violence with its beatings, shootings and firebombings. This isn't a game that uses shocks to compensate for a lack of quality gameplay, though. Sure, the content is hardly that of civilized folks, but it's a game designed to provide a caricature of the mobster way of life. The gun warfare, drug pushing, pimping, driveby-fueled experience is no more ridiculous than that of an R-rated action flick—which is another form of media that also shouldn't be experienced by minors.

In the past, contentious games have been accused of using controversial themes to compensate for inferior storylines, pathetic game-play and cheap thrills. *GTA3* is different. Like the HBO show *The Sopranos*, this is a quality product that happens to also have controversial content, but vice-versa.

We've tried our best to convey the way that the game sucks you in and holds your attention, but the best way is to try it out for yourself when the game hits stores in mid-October, with that M rating prominently featured on the box.

Video Games Have Ratings, Just Like Movies

The Entertainment Software Rating Board provides information about video game content. ESRB ratings are intended as guidelines only; parents should still monitor minors' purchases.



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TEEN RATING
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 These Games Contain More Adult Themes, Such As Blood And Gore, Stronger Language And Sexual Themes. Designed Not Suitable For Those Under 17.



ADULTS ONLY RATING
 The Extreme Of The Ratings, Suitable For Adults Only. Packs Sexual Themes And Extreme Violence. Console Manufacturers Have Yet To Allow An AO-Rated Game.

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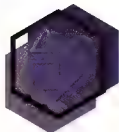


PlayStation 2



Violence

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it's our 50th issue, so here are 50 games you really should have played, and 50 people you really should be aware of. Don't say we don't try to educate you. We care that much.

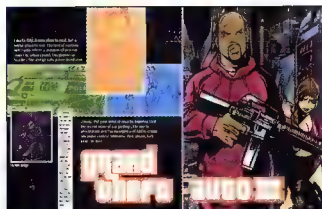
METAL GEAR SOLID 2 • 100

In our continuing coverage of this amazing game, we offer stealth tactics on how to free up some time for the week it comes out.



SSX TRICKY • 60

The original was the "kittier app" for PS2 a year ago; now EA Sports Big brings us an update to the game. The tracks are cooler, there are more characters, there is a bigger emphasis on tricks, and the soundtrack gets funky up to the max.



GRAND THEFT AUTO III • 136

Controversial? You bet. But there's a lot more to Rockstar's upcoming gangster title than senseless acts of violence (though they're there if you want them). There's actually the making of a revolutionary game here, too.



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Spider-Man, Spider-Man, does whatever a spider can. And the X-Men. And some other stuff.

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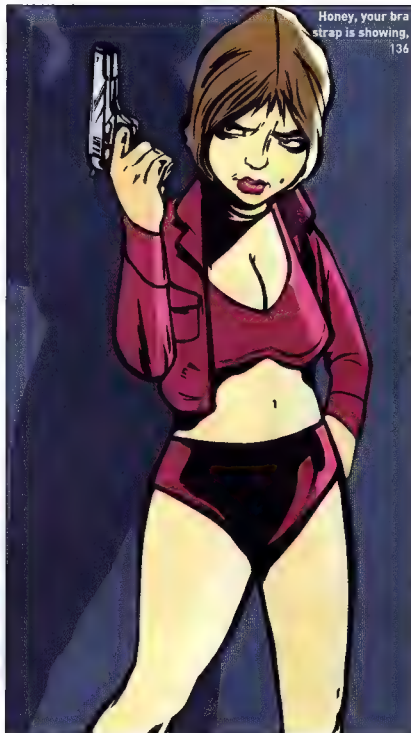
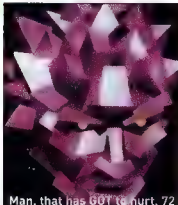
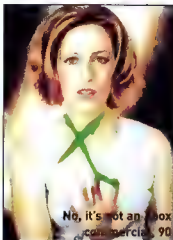
Let us know your thoughts. Write us at our usual address, or send us e-mail at OPMR2iffdavis.com

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It's issue 50! So that gives us ample excuse for producing lists comprised of 50 things.

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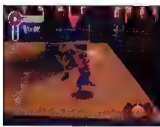
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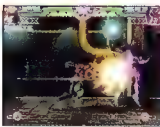
Marvel-ous Demos!

This month you get not one but two demos of highly anticipated sequels to superhero hits on the PS one. Spider-Man 2 leads off our demo disc, followed by X-Men: Mutant Academy 2—both of which we're reviewing this issue. We've also assembled five classic demos to go along with the top 50 PS one games feature. And topping it all off, we've got two tasty video previews for a pair of hot holiday releases: Dragon Warrior VII and Syphon Filter 3. Oh yeah—we can't forget about Barbie Explorer!



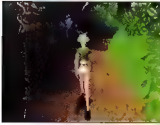
Spider-Man 2

Your friendly neighborhood Spider-Man returns to pop a sticky cap in the baddies' collective asses.



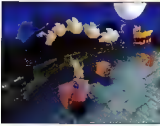
X-Men: Mutant Academy 2

Excelsior! This hot-looking fighter returns for a bigger, badder, better run in the ring.



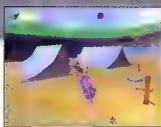
Barbie Explorer

This season Barbie is sporting a trendy safari bucket hat with matching khakis, set off perfectly by a jaunty leather adventure belt



CLASSIC DEMO Crash Bandicoot: WARPED

This is the best of the series, and judging by what we've seen of the PS2 version, might still be.



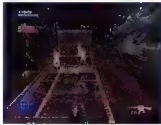
CLASSIC DEMO Spyro: Year of the Dragon

If you haven't spent time with this ultra-cute platformer, you owe it to yourself to check it out.



CLASSIC DEMO Twisted Metal 2

TM1 might have been the real start of it all, but TM2 is what caused the genre to explode.



CLASSIC DEMO Syphon Filter 2

A little bit of Tomb Raider, a little bit of Metal Gear Solid, a whole lot of ass-kickin'.



CLASSIC DEMO Tekken 3

And speaking of ass-kickin'—here's arguably the greatest fighter to ever grace the PS one.

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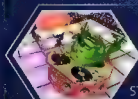


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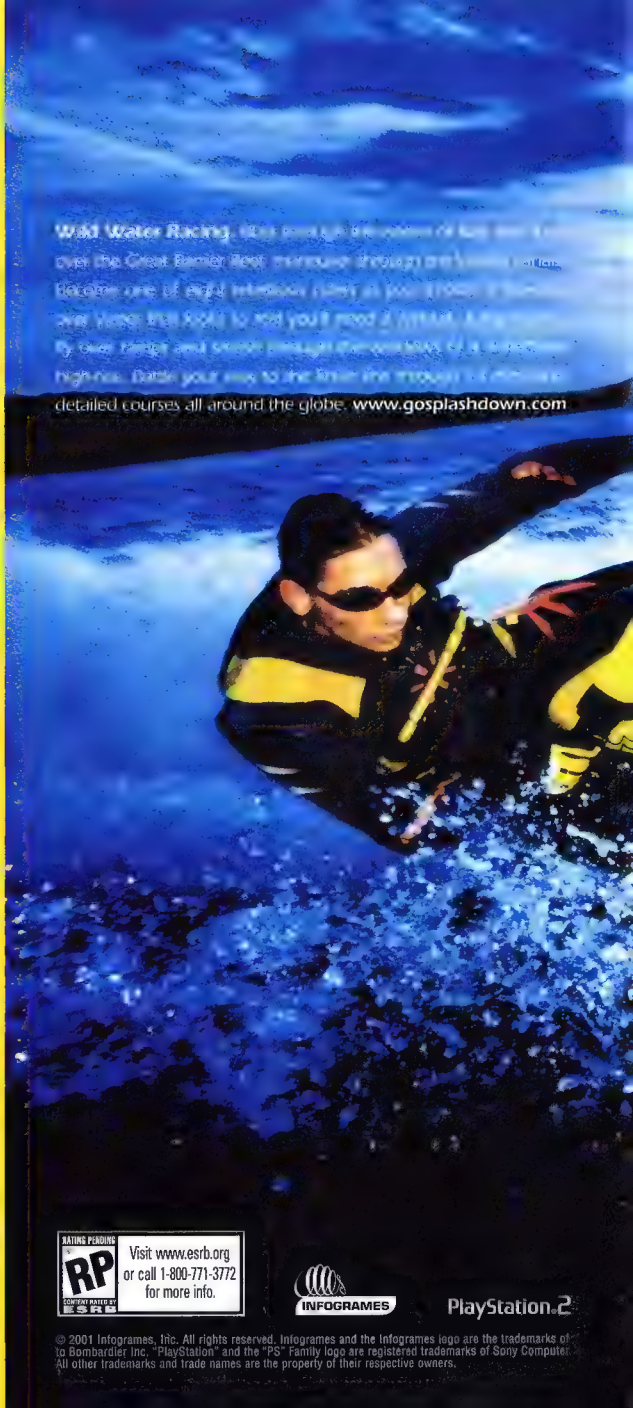
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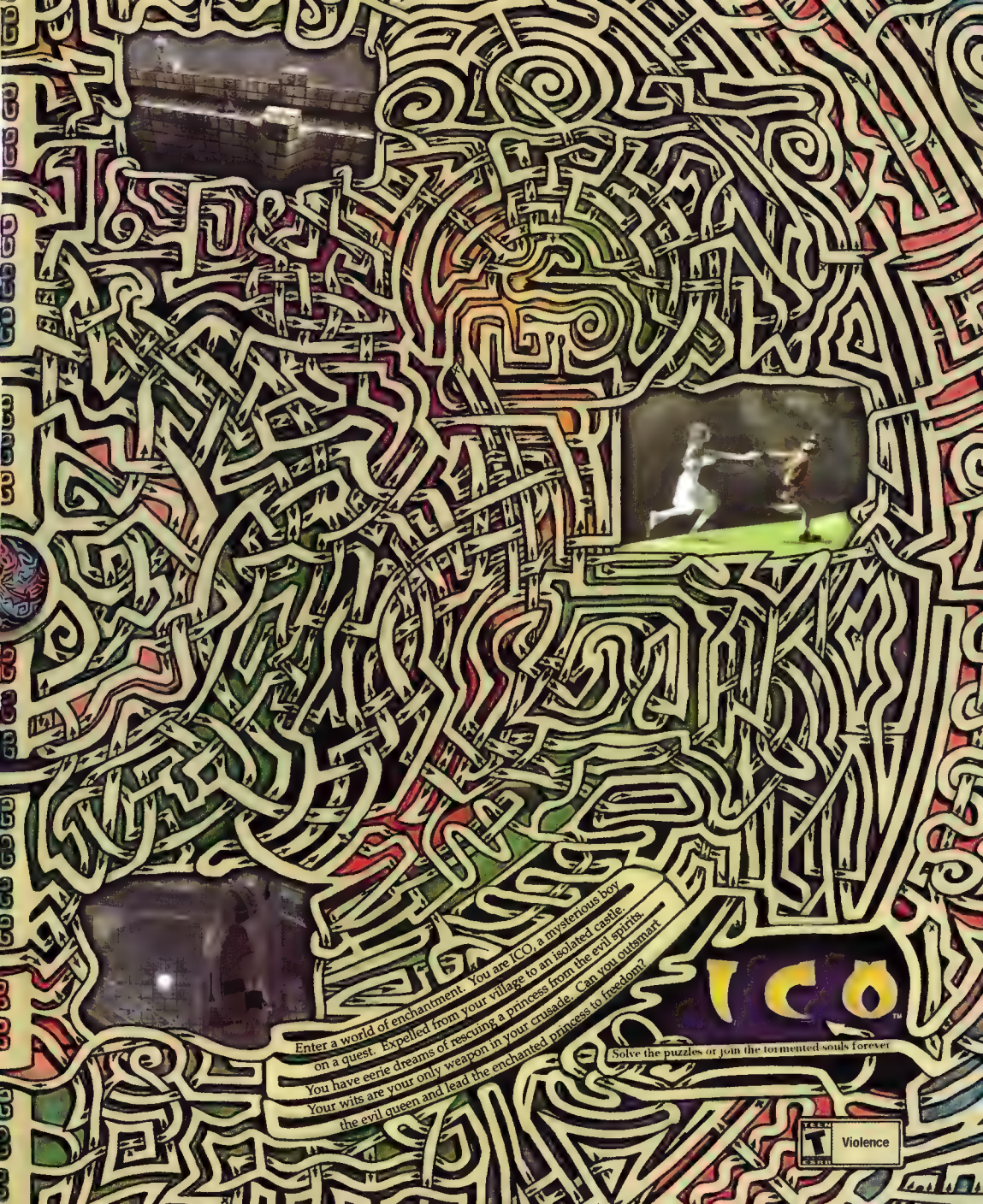




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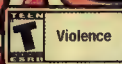
PlayStation 2



Enter a world of enchantment. You are ICO, a mysterious boy on a quest. Expelled from your village to an isolated castle. You have eerie dreams of rescuing a princess from the evil spirits. Your wits are your only weapon in your crusade. Can you outsmart the evil queen and lead the enchanted princess to freedom?

ICO™

Solve the puzzles or join the tormented souls forever





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HERDY GERDY



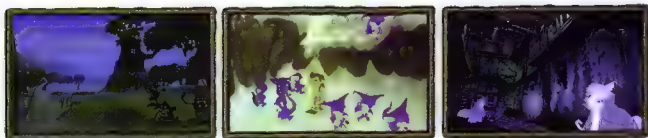
An epic adventure
awaits you...



A New World.

Welcome to a world unlike anything you've experienced before. One where your every footstep could have an effect on the balance of nature — one where creatures live and breathe around you. A world where animals have thoughts, feelings and personalities that you must learn to understand and influence. A world where lush, lavish meadowlands are as commonplace as dark, eerie towns. A world where a working food chain is in order — and you're in the middle of it.





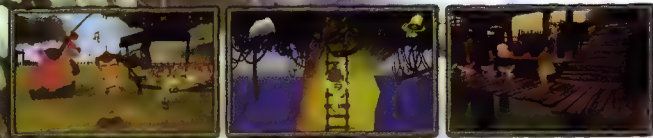
A New Hero.

Never before has a videogame offered such depth and innovation. Herdy Gerdy's marathon adventure features unique gameplay dynamics that are integrated within a vibrant world with its own delicately balanced eco-system and a rather unusual population. Herdy Gerdy's gameplay structure is based upon the reactions of the island's inhabitants to their environment and to one another. These reactions are numerous in their diversity, triggering a series of unpredictable and often amusing events! In order to become victorious, the player must learn exactly what makes each animal tick, what they are afraid of, what they are physically capable of and ultimately how best to contain them in safety.

Gerdy cannot rely solely on his herding skills to manage the local wildlife — on his travels he'll meet characters that may offer advice or even give him herding tools to make his task easier.

For example, the flute can be used to charm creatures and lead them in a Pied Piper style dance across the terrain, and the herding stick's tinkling bells draw animals toward it like a magnet. As he journeys across the island, Gerdy will also obtain new items of clothing that in turn bring new abilities such as jumping, swimming, climbing and increased strength to move heavy objects.

It's a complex and compelling world with more variable factors than you can shake a herding stick at. Get ready for some serious animal attraction!



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February 2002

"...an amazing-looking thinking-man's game." *IGN*

"One of the most beautiful games to ever grace a console... and it's got depth to match its graphics." *PSM*

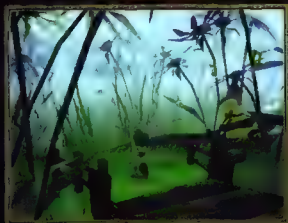
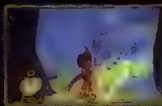
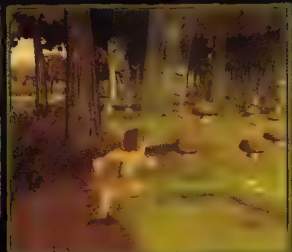
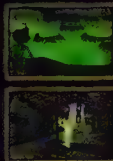
"This non-violent game is brimming with originality and innovation, and showcases some of the most fluid animation ever seen in a video game." *PSE 2*

"What a gorgeous game this is! Bearing a beautiful pastoral aesthetic bathed in a surreal, fairy-tale fantasy, Herdy Gerdy is a delight to look at." *Gamers Republic*

"...one of PS2's truly next-generation games." *IGN.com*

"Every element in the game — from the largest hill to the smallest individual flower — is individually modeled, and the attention to detail is exquisite." *GameSpot.com*

"...the game is highly innovative; it's also one of the most impressive-looking videogames ever developed...period." *PSM*



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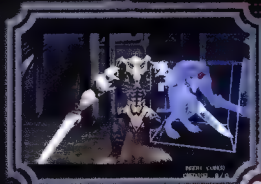
PlayStation 2



Don't fire until you see
the whites of their fangs.

Listen. Can you hear your heart pounding? They can.
Deep in the darkness, the beast stirs their ancient hunger. Only your will
to survive and sweaty trigger finger can keep you from their bloodlust.

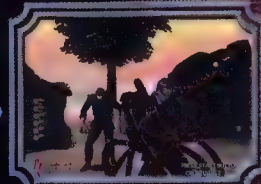
From ahead. From above. From behind. The beasts shall come.



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INPUT



Letter of the month

I was very disappointed in your September 2001 issue.

I first learned about this game when I purchased the Summer 2001 Jampack and played the limited level through. I have to say I can't agree more with Joe's comment on the game. I have been trying to find out when it will be released, but most magazines don't even list it in any release chart.

This game is about intuition and heart. I've known it since I was a child. I was never since my wife was glued to the TV set while I was playing it. Normally she drifts out of the room when I play video games. Since then she hasn't stopped asking when the game with "the little boy and the lady" will be out.

As a past game artist (and current feature film PG artist), I am thrilled to see a game that is so thoroughly saturated in art, both visually and emotionally, yet is so simple. Ico's strength is also in the subtle way it handles simple things. Yorda doesn't just run to Ico when he holds out his hand and calls. Yorda urgently comes running when Ico gently holds out his hand and somehow happily but stoically calls.

One comment about Joe's article, however, is that it wasn't stated anywhere that Yorda is blind. The relationship between them and indeed the whole game become more complete with this fact. They need each other in a protective way. (Perhaps this was a gem you were holding back for our delight!)

Regardless, thanks for having the guts to put Ico on the cover and for putting the game into the hands of prospective players on the November PS2 Demo DVD. I just hope game players out there take the time to let their hearts be drawn in.

Wes Burian
wburian@pacbell.net

Ico really is a special kind of game, isn't it? You're right that the marketing surrounding Ico has been a bit quiet, but lately the game has been building up some major buzz. As for the theory that Yorda is blind, well, it's just a theory. We didn't mention it in the feature because that thought came up in a discussion about the game's story on the Web. All of us here who've played the game don't really think that theory holds up. But it does point to yet another major reason why Ico is such a special game. It offers different perspectives and interpretations to the game. So let's hear some of your theories—tell us what you think is really going on in Ico. Send your e-mails to opm@ziffdavis.com, and mark the subject line ICO IMPRESSIONS.

How Dare You Give Me A PS2 Disc!

I'm a college student. I have little money to spend. I have a PS one, but no PS2. Now you can see my predicament when I spend so much money on a magazine (which I honestly enjoy) just to get a frisbee to go along with it every other month. I thought this was the Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine, not the Official PS2 Frisbee Every Other Month for Those Who Have Car, Apartment and Tuition Payments and Can't Afford a PS2.

Compromise time: Why don't you guys make two magazines—one for the PS one and another for the PS2? I'm sure you guys would be rollin' in the dough then, and making me...er, other people happy
FuManChu1138@aol.com

Whoa. You've got a car and an apartment? You're already better off than us poor OPM editors! Look, here's the deal: We're a PlayStation mag, meaning we focus on all things PlayStation. Having two separate mags doesn't make sense, since there isn't much PS one material to cover anymore. It may sound harsh, but it's time to face up to the simple fact that developers have severely scaled back their PS one production, leaving only a handful of games for us to cover. That's why we've decided to roll out a PS2 disc every other month—so we can be sure to have something for every PS one only owners can still enjoy our demos in the other half of the year, and be assured that those six discs will contain the very best of what's left out there.



Ready for More Rumble

I just got done playing NASCAR Rumble for about the millionth time, and I was just thinking: Why haven't I seen a sequel NASCAR Rumble? I know that a sequel would look great on a PS2, or since I don't have one, how about on the PS one? If you know anything about a second NASCAR Rumble, then please tell me whatever you know
Mathew Ballard
bigamer24@yahoo.com

Get yourself a PS2 already, then pick up a copy of Rumble Racing. It's basically the sequel to NASCAR Rumble, only without the license. We loved it, awarding it a healthy 4.5 rating in our June issue.

Think you have what it takes to write the Letter of the Month? Send us your video game expositions and you could win the official OPM Box of Joy. We pack our Box of Joy with an assortment of nifty goodies from all your favorite software companies.

Frustrated Gamer

Hello, fine gamers at OPM. I hope you are all well, for I am not. I consider myself a hardcore gamer. I love obscure titles and old-school gaming. But recently I have been extremely frustrated with the video game society today—so frustrated that I have compiled a list cleverly titled "The 10 Most Frustrating Things About Video Games." Here it is:

1. When a game is so short it lasts all but Quake III's load times.
2. When a crash during an extreme-sports game takes forever to recover from.
3. When a game is so 50% difficult that even unlimited continues can't help.
4. When a game's box art is the only redeeming quality.
5. When conversions from lesser systems are full of glitches and bugs.
6. When people are buying great games only for the demos they come with.
7. When the Army Men series is more popular than Final Fantasy!
8. When only one DDR game is released here.
9. When the GT Force wheel is a "Limited Issue."
10. When two frickin' Spec Ops games are in the Top 10!

Thank you for listening to my ranting. I bid you good day.
EvilAlfie@aol.com

But Isn't the World Flat?

I have found an error in Final Fantasy VII, FFVIII, FFIX and probably a few other games. On the world map, going off the top edge brings you to the bottom, and going off the left side brings you to the right (and vice versa). At some point in each of those three games, the world you're traveling through is shown as a sphere. But that's impossible, given the way the world map is. If you take a piece of paper and make two of the opposite edges meet, then wrap the resulting cylinder around to make the other two edges meet, you would find that the worlds in FFVII-IX are shaped like...donuts. Do you think Squaresoft will ever fix this?
Cotina569@AOL.com

Someone's got waaaaay too much time on his hands!

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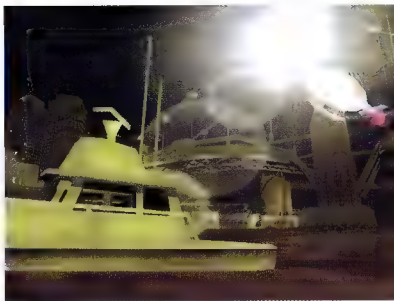
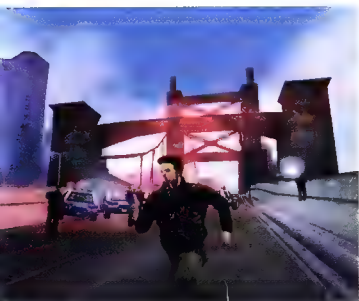




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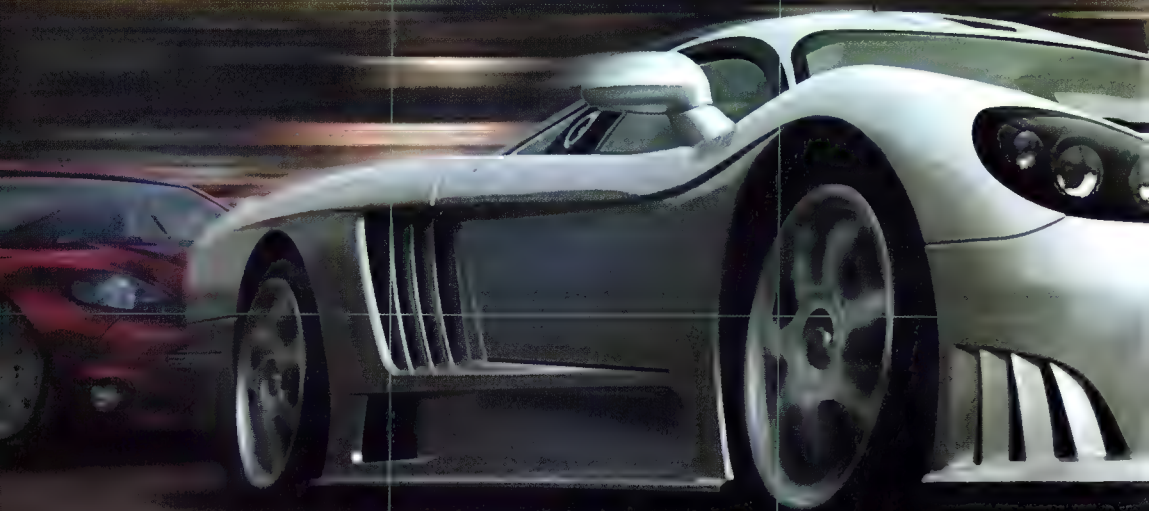
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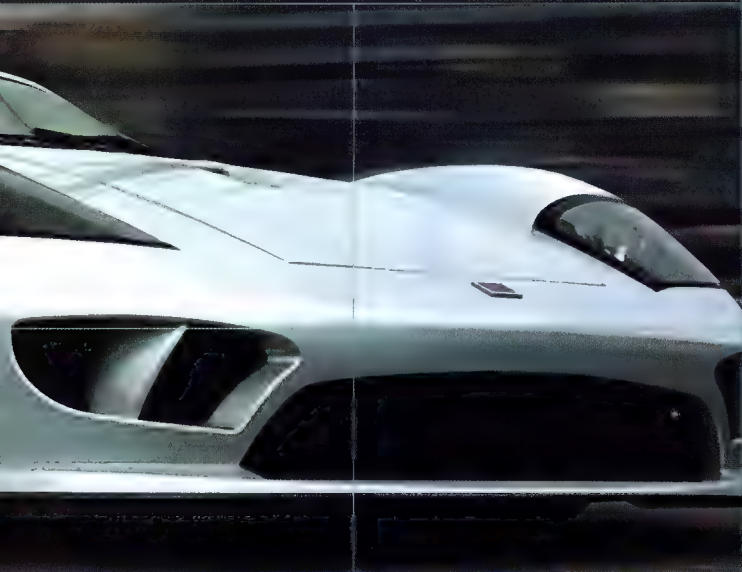
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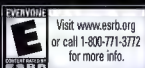
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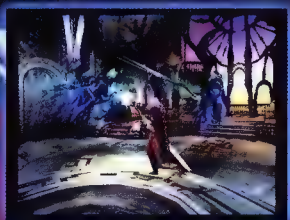



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2000 YEARS AGO, IN THE DARKEST REACHES OF HELL, A DEMON SWORDSMAN NAMED SPARDA
WAGED A ONE-MAN WAR TO SAVE THE HUMAN WORLD FROM DAMNATION. 2000 YEARS LATER,
A SHADOWY FIGURE NAMED DANTE FINDS CLUES THAT THE DEVIL WILL RISE UP AGAIN.
SOMEWHERE BETWEEN A MAN AND A DEMON LIES OUR ONLY HOPE FOR SALVATION.

Devil May Cry

FROM THE CREATORS OF "RESIDENT EVIL"

DEVILMAYCRY.COM



CAPCOM

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opm presents

The TOP

MOVIES, SNACKS AND VIDEO GAME HOOKS



K
en

Another name that no one at that time had ever heard of. But today these names, along with those of plenty of other games and game creators, are commonplace. In the past 50 issues of this magazine, the PlayStation has introduced us to a new whole generation of video games and the stars who create them. To commemorate this, *OPM* has come up with a showcase of PlayStation's most important games and faces—50 must-own PS one titles and 50 of the people who make all these games possible. In selecting which people to highlight, we've looked not only at the folks who've helped define the PlayStation in the past, but also the people who will help shape the games of tomorrow. And while there are no doubt plenty of others deserving recognition who didn't make the cut, we're pretty confident in our selection of 50 names that you, as a PlayStation gamer, should be aware of.

50



Discovery
Lies Within.



Control your hero's destiny
with limitless skill combinations.



PlayStation 2





+ Explore epic landscapes
in a seamless fantasy realm.

+ Play with a friend -
2 players can control
multiple party members.

Take on the role of Jarik, a young warrior who must embark on a quest to
unravel the mystery behind his shattered realm. Gather your heroes and
adventure in the vast and dangerous world of Chandar.
But beware of the discovery that lies within.

The Legend of Alion Dár



Violence

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OPM'S TOP 50 PS one games

Any games sound like a lot, don't they? We thought so too—until we actually took on the daunting task of naming our 50 must-play PS one games to commemorate our 50th issue. Loud arguments ensued. Tough cuts were made. But what you see here and over the next few pages represents, in alphabetical order (talk about arguments!), the 50 games that we at *OPM* suggest hold a permanent spot in your PS one library. We've even thrown in a few that predate our magazine's October 1997 debut. So, theoretically, *Bubay 3D* could be on this list. But it's not. 'Cause it's *Bubay 3D*. Anyway, here you have it.

Ace Combat 2

None of the Ace games are terribly realistic, but for action-packed flight combat they're hard to top. This masterpiece features a unique way to adjust the difficulty. You can hire a wingman to help you out if things get too hairy. Sure, Ace 3 has better graphics, and sure, there might be a little more variety in the missions. But the laughable challenge level in Ace 3 makes it hard to recommend it over its older brother.

Ape Escape

Don't be put off by this game's cute, cartoony graphics and decidedly kiddie story; underneath all that is one of the most addictive 3D platformers you'll find on the PS one. Thanks to the innovative control, which takes full advantage of both of the Dual Shock's analog sticks, *Ape Escape* is an experience unlike any other. Oh yeah, and did we mention that your objective is to catch monkeys? If that doesn't scream fun, then what does?



Minoru Arakawa

What's his job?
He's the president of Nintendo of America.

Nintendo? Buh!

He was the first person to tell Ken Kutaragi that the Nintendo/PlayStation project had been cancelled—thus changing the nature of the video game market forever.

What's he up to now?

Preparing the launch of the VideoCube.

Bet he feels silly now

The reason that Nintendo pulled the plug on their deal with Sony was because they wanted to work with Philips on the CD/I format.

Bruno Bonnell

Very powerful Frenchman
Chairman and CEO of Infogrames.

World domination.

Wahahaha!

With a stream of choice acquisitions over the past few years, including the immortal Atari, Infogrames is fast becoming the other big publisher.

What's he doing tomorrow?

Most likely buying up more choice companies.

T-shirts, too?

Brute-force to bring back the Atari brand in a big way. In fact, he's stated that certain future Infogrames titles such as *Stuntman* will be released under the Atari brand.

Scott Campbell

He's your ice cream man

Why should I care?

Scott and his team at IncoG Inc. completely salvaged the Twisted Metal franchise. Is he doing another one?

Two, actually. Twisted

Metal: Black Online and Twisted Metal: Small Brawl.

John Carmack

Heard of him?

He's the co-founder, owner and lead programmer at id Software, creators of *Wolfenstein 3D*, *Doom*, *Quake*, and basically the entire first-person shooter genre.

Why should I care?

He's been just as influential to the PlayStation market as the PC market, with the *Doom* games, *Quake II* and *Quake III*.

What's he doing next?

announced, alongside another top-secret, as-yet-unnamed project. How do you announce a top-secret, unnamed project?

Did you know?

Half of the founding members of id split after the first *Quake* was released to found Ion Storm. That same company is also responsible for *Deus Ex*, due on PS2 in November.

Mark Cerny

Heard of him?

President of Cerny Games.

What's he done?

A veteran game creator, Cerny



has worked hand in hand with Sony and Naughty Dog on all of the Crash Bandicoot and

What now?

His next two titles are *Jak & Daxter* and the secret PS2 title from Insomniac, the guys who brought you *Spyro*.

Sonic's marbles

Cerny was the creator of the classic game *Marble Madness*. Not only that, but he also helped work on the original title in the *Sonic The Hedgehog* series for Sega.

David Doak

Who is he?

President of Free Radical.

He's British, isn't he?

Yes. David and his team are widely regarded as the finest developers of four-player split-screen shoot-'em-ups. Before starting up Free Radical, this crew masterminded *GoldenEye* for Nintendo.

More shooters?

David and the rest of Free Radical are hard at work on *TimeSplitters 2* and one other future shooter title.

Not good enough?

Free Radical originally turned down the Eidos offer to make *TimeSplitters* a PS2 launch game because they didn't think it'd be possible to come up with a good game that quickly.

Martin Edmondson

Never heard of him?

The boss of Reflections

Interactive.

Who?

Reflections produced the *Destruction Derby* games when the PlayStation originally launched, and went on to wow

us all with *Driver*.

Ah, What's next, Driver 3?

Stuntman is up next, and looking incredible. The

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Columbia Pictures and Square Pictures Present FINAL FANTASY: THE SPIRITS WITHIN



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THE TOP 50 MOVERS, SHAKERS AND VIDEO GAME MAKERS

inevitable *Driver 3* is also in the works, yes.
A bit like *Grand Theft Auto 3*?
Driver 3 will no doubt be compared with *Grand Theft Auto 3* because of thematic similarities. Were you aware, though, that Edmondson used to work at DMA Design (on an Amiga game called *Ballistix*) a long time before they ever produced *GTA*?

GIKURO FUJIWARA

Who is he?
 President of Whoopee Camp and Deep Space.
Why should I care?
 Fujiwara's Whoopee Camp studio was responsible for the incredibly cool *Tomb Raider* games for the PS one. And his recently established Deep Space studio (part-owned by Sony) created the PS2 survival-horror game *Extermination*.
What's he doing next?
 Both of Fujiwara's studios are currently working on projects for PS2. And don't be surprised if everyone's favorite pink-haired jungle boy makes a comeback.
Did you know?
 Fujiwara used to work at Capcom, and had a hand in developing a good portion of the company's hits. *Resident Evil*, and even *Ghosts and Goblins* wouldn't be what they are today had he not been involved.

BILL GATES

Bill who?
 President of Microsoft, richest man in the world.
Nope, still not heard of him
 Microsoft is ready for war. They want what Sony has and are going to do whatever it takes to get it—dominance in the video game market. The Xbox is said to be Microsoft's biggest consumer launch of all time.
What's he doing tonight?
 Keeping a very keen eye on the launch of his Xbox platform.

BING GORDON

Who's he, then?
 Executive VP and chief creative officer, Electronic Arts.
Electronic what?
 Dun. EA is a multimillion-dollar company, and the biggest games publisher in the world.
What's he doing next?
 Watch for a big push into online games and plenty more PS2 titles.
Did you know?
 Bing was one of the first employees of EA, way back in 1982, along with 3D boss Trip Hawkins. The company was originally called *Amazin' Software* before eventually switching to the familiar Electronic Arts.

TEIYU GOTOH

Who?
 Art director, Sony Corporate Design Center.
Why should I care?
 The man responsible for the look of the PlayStation and for the design of the all-conquering Dual Shock.
What else does he do?
 Works on all manner of Sony digital entertainment product. If it looks cool, chances are Gotoh has a hand in it.
Did you know?
 Folks at Sony and game developers

originally rejected his design for the PlayStation controller because it was too "extraordinary."

PHIL HARRISON

Who?
 Senior VP of development, Sony Computer Entertainment Europe.
Remember him?
 He used to be the chief evangelist of the PlayStation in the U.S. and was also the chief third-party software guy, so that means he helped developers push the system and make the games as great as they could be.
What now?
 Now that he's the head of development at Sony Computer Entertainment Europe, he's in charge of the studios producing *The Getaway*, *Dropship* and *WipeOut Fusion*.
Gaming Oath?
 He used to be a big *Sisters of Mercy* fan.



HARRISON

photo originally taken by Jay Blakesburg

TONY HAWK

Tony who?
 The most well-known skateboarder ever. And arguably the best. The guy who did the 900.
Oh, him. Why is he here?
 Not only is he featured on the game with his name: *Tony Hawk's Pro*

OPM'S TOP 50 PS ONE GAMES

BUSHIDO BLADE

A fighting game unlike any other. Square's classic does away with such staple fighting game features as combos and life bars, replacing them with skill-based moves like one-hit kills. A truly new experience, *Bushido Blade* also allows players to fight on different landscapes in a single battle. The game's first-person fighting mode is also a blast.

CASTLEVANIA: SYMPHONY OF THE NIGHT

2D action-adventure gaming at its

finest, no question about it. Featuring a massive quest filled with RPG elements, mind-blowing 2D backgrounds, fantastic character artwork, an astounding soundtrack and some of the best Castlevania gameplay ever seen, *SOTN* is a PS one classic that can't be missed.

CHRONO CROSS

The pseudo-sequel to the popular *Chrono Trigger*, *Cross* features some of the most colorful and vibrant visuals on the PS one, a brilliant story, an astounding musical score from Yasunori Mitsuda and 40

different playable characters throughout its quest. Another masterpiece from Square, and one of the best RPGs of all time.

COOL BOARDERS 2

Ever wonder what prompted the Great Snowboarding Rush of 1998? Here's your answer. The original *Cool Boarders* was an entertaining sleeper, but it's the greater variety

of *Cool Boarders 2* that solidified the sport as a viable game genre. Later sequels would improve on different areas of the formula, but few PS one games have been able to reproduce this total package of great track design and insane speed.

CRASH BANDICOOT: WARPED

If ever a game made people think of Crash Bandicoot as Sony's mascot character (which, for the record, he never actually was)—just ask



IT'S NOT WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS, BUT WHAT IT LETS GO.



GUILTY GEAR X

(BY YOUR SIDE: G. GEAR)



When magic was finally harnessed, it created an uprising. But when Gears received free will, it created an uprising. Welcome to the 22nd century-where the battle line between human and Gear has been drawn. In an epic tournament that not only tests the skills but also the will of those bold enough to enter, only one Gear can survive the pain.



PlayStation 2



Sammy

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SPIN

The Top 50 movers, shakers and video game makers



HAWK

Snake is the ultimate sound asset to the game's brilliance. He plays the game, gives advice to the designers at Neversoft, and once THPS3 is online, expect to find him cruising around the lobbies looking to outskate you.

What else does he do?

Skateboarding. And pitching in on THPS4, if we're lucky.

He must be old now, right?

Having now skated for over 20 years, Tony began his career at the age of nine. So no. Not really.

DAVID HAYTER

Didn't he write the X-Men movie?

Yes. He's also the voice of Solid Snake in the Metal Gear Solid games.

Does he talk like that?

It takes a heroic voice like Hayter's to make Snake a true bad-ass. That, and a lot of cigarettes. Voice acting in games is generally questionable, but Hayter's Snake is topnotch.

Any more movies or games?

Aside from MGS2, Hayter has already turned in a draft of a movie version of *The Incredible Hulk*, which will likely be revised before Ang Lee directs the film, due in 2003. He's also working with Tom DeSanto on the script for *X-Men 2*, which we'll hopefully see by the end of next year.

Such a hero

Heroism is in Hayter's blood. In addition to Snake, he also voiced Captain America in the Spider-Man cartoons of the '90s.

AMY HENNING

Who is she?

Longtime lead on the Legacy of Kain games and director of Soul Reaver 2.



KOJIMA

Quite cool then, huh?

The first *Soul Reaver* was one of the most visually stunning and technologically impressive games for the PS one, and the entire series has continued to break new ground in areas of storytelling and support—no talent.

What's next for Amy?

Our guess is taking a long-overdue vacation. Staffing woes and project complexity are rumored to have caused SR2 to go far over budget

and long past schedule.

Nevertheless, Amy has not ruled out further games set in the world of Nosgoth.

Grouchy Goth

The top-flight talent roster Amy has signed up for the Kain games includes the voice of Grouchy Smurf, the director of *Mad About You* and the singer from new-wave band Information Society.

KAZ HIRAI

He's quite important

Because he's the president of SCEA And that means?

He's the man in charge of the PlayStation in the U.S. That makes him a pretty important dude.

What's he doing next?

Continuing to evangelize the whole "computer entertainment" thing, and assuring that the PS one and PS2 fend off the competition this holiday season.

SAM HOUSER

Who is he?

Creative director and president of Rockstar Games.

Rockstar?

He's one of the minds behind the masterpiece better known as *Grand Theft Auto 3*. He was also part of the brain trust that created *Smuggler's Run*, *Midnight Club* and the entire *GTA* series.

Games for adults

Along with Rockstar partner-in-

OPM'S TOP 50 PS ONE GAMES

Universal, it was *Warped*. As some would argue, the best 2.5D platformer ever released, it featured all the essentials—collectible fruit, crate bashing, colorful enemies to jump on, etc.—and presented them in a way that we all couldn't get enough of.

CTR: Crash Team Racing

Naughty Dog's CTR took cart racing to new heights with its brilliant track design, spot-on control and innovative turbo system. Even the graphics are impressive—we're still in awe of the utter lack of pop-up, draw-in, fogging or any other glitches. It's an utter blast, either solo or with three other friends.

Dead or Alive

Featuring a style of gameplay that falls somewhere between *Virtua*

Fighter and *Tekken*, *Dead or Alive* is a great 3D brawler from the wizards at Team Ninja. Not only is the action fast, but the game engine is technically quite proficient on the PS one. And like the rest of the DOA series, the original game also has its fair share of voluptuous babes that like to, er, bounce.

Devil Dice

Devil Dice's one-player mode doesn't quite match its multiplayer for depth and replay value. The higher levels of the mind-boggling puzzle mode can prove frustrating even

to the most gifted puzzle solvers, but the more simple multiplayer mode allows up to four players to compete in a fast-paced contest.

Dino Crisis 2

Regina's return to PS one offered a style of gameplay totally different than the original *Dino Crisis*.

Whereas the original emphasized frugality with resources and running away, the sequel was entirely action-packed, encouraging you to blow away any raptor or pterodactyl that appears before you—meaning, on just about every screen.



Dead or alive 2

photo (orig.maj.) taken by Shuyi Kuo/yeash

crime Terry Donovan, both will continue to push the gaming industry envelope with film-quality titles that laugh in the face of convention. Forget games-as-toys—Rockstar is making games for an adult audience.

Official! Games get you laid

Sam met his current beau at a bar. How'd it go down? He approached, sat down, said he made video games. She asked if he'd ever heard of Grand Theft Auto, that she'd been having trouble beating a particular part. His response: "Yeah, I've heard of it. I made it."

AKIHIRO IMAMURA

What does he do?

He's the producer of Silent Hill 2. Creepy guy then, huh?

This is a man who understands how to make a video game scare you. The first Silent Hill sold half a million copies, and the sequel is incredible. Will he do another one?

There are already rumors of Silent Hill 3 in the works, but it's a closely guarded secret.

Get a different ending

You can apparently affect the outcome of Silent Hill 2 by the number of times you examine both the photograph and the bloody knife in the inventory screen.

KEIJI INAFUNE

How do you pronounce that?

Kai Joe Ee Na Foo Nee. The Producer of Onimusha: Warlords—and he created Mega Man.

Why should I care?

Onimusha was the first game in Japan to sell a million copies—and it didn't do so badly out West, either. Meanwhile, Mega Man remains a big cash cow for Capcom, with Mega Man X6 due in November.

Smell a sequel?

Can you say Onimusha 2? No? Weird.

Mega Man vs. Mario

Though known for his action titles, Inafune's true start with games began with Enix's Dragon Quest RPGs. He joined Capcom shortly after to create Mega Man, who was inspired by robot cartoons (and the desire to compete directly with Super Mario Bros.).

VICTOR IRELAND

Who is he?

President of Working Designs.

So?

The company has continued to bring over lots of Japan's finest niche titles, like Silhouette Mirage, Silphied and the Lunar series. Ireland is also known for being vocal about the success of the PS2.

Anything on the way?

Working Designs states that it will release a PS2 game early next year, although there's no word yet on what it will be. There's also a very good chance Working Designs will be bringing over Lunar 3 for the PS2 at some point.

ATOMONBU ITAGAKI

Who is he?

Head of Tecmo's Team Ninja.

Why should I care?

Having created the Dead or Alive series, Team Ninja is widely regard-

ed as one of the best fighting game developers around. And Itagaki has been an integral component of their success.

Xbox "exclusive," huh?

He and his team are hard at work on Dead or Alive 3 for the Xbox and PS2. They've also been hard at work on the next-generation Ninja Gaiden, likely to hit PS2 at some point.

Tomb Ninja Gaiden Raider

Itagaki and Team Ninja are big fans of the Tomb Raider series. They hope to use some aspects of Tomb Raider as inspiration for Ninja Gaiden.

JOEL JEWETT

Never heard of him?

He's the president of Neversoft.

Why should I care?

Without Joel Jewett and the superstars of Neversoft, you wouldn't have wasted away the last two years of your life playing Tony Hawk's Pro Skater and its brilliant sequel.

What's he doing next?

The third installment of THPS, this time on PS2. This time online.

Also overseeing the Spider-Man series as it webs its way over to next-generation platforms with Spider-Man: The Movie on PS2.

Bruce Willis Pro Skater

The engine that Neversoft used for the Tony Hawk games was originally created for the Bruce Willis shooter Apocalypse. It was also used in Spider-Man.

HIDEO KOJIMA

You must have heard of him

He's Mr. Metal Gear Solid.

Why should I care?

C'mon! He's the man responsible for Metal Gear Solid! So he's

probably one of the best known and most-respected game developers in the world.

No more Metal Gear?

Metal Gear Solid 2 is rumored to be his last game involving Solid Snake. We hear his next game is something that deals with family relationships.

Frankie Goes to Hollywood

Kojima's favorite music is British

new wave from the '70s and '80s. That might help explain Snake's questionable hairstyle.

KEN KUTARAGI

Who's your daddy?

He's the "father of the PlayStation."

Why should I care?

Well, he did a pretty neat job of inventing the PlayStation, and then an even neater job of inventing the PlayStation 2.

What's he doing next?

Bet you can't guess. How about... PlayStation 3.

He does other things too

Aside from being your personal hero



KUTARAGI

Driver

As you might imagine, this game's all about driving. But, wait—there's much more here. As an undercover cop, it's your job to infiltrate the local crime ring, serving as the wheelman for any number of nefarious adventures. A topnotch driving engine and levels based on real-world locations made both Driver and Driver 2 surefire hits. But glitches and an unbalanced difficulty level in the sequel make the original a more solid buy.

Final Fantasy VII

Bristling with style, Square's space shooter is a classic in the genre. The gameplay is fast and furious, and the background graphics look

stunning even today. Even the music (anyone who's played the game will remember the first stage's orchestral chords and throbbing techno beat) is a treat.

FIFA 2001

EA's footie game shocked soccer fans last year by actually being better than all previous soccer efforts on the system. Previously Konami's ISS series had ruled the roost, but FIFA's awesome graphics, great controls and ample array of options ensured that it became

the pick for fans of the fastest growing sport in the world.

Final Fantasy VII

With a bold cinematic approach, FFVII single-handedly changed the way we think of RPGs, finally making it "cool" to play them. The story and translation were problematic, and the graphics were significantly upgraded in the next two editions—but FFVII still stands the test of time thanks to its memorable characters and engrossing gameplay. What's more, FFVII boasts one of the most-talked-about scenes ever: the heart-wrenching death of Aeris.

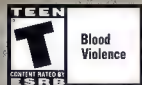
Final Fantasy VIII

Square took their flagship franchise in an even more cinematic



nger Express

nger Express



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the top fifty

movers, shakers and video game makers

direction with FFXIII, packing the game with stunning FMV, well-developed characters, and a touching story that revolves around the theme of love. But if you're thinking that Square might have forgot about the gameplay, think again: FFXIII also introduced the remarkably deep Junction system, allowing you to fully customize your characters for battle and beyond.

Final Fantasy Tactics

Our favorite PS one Final Fantasy, FFXIII took everything that was right about the series' old-school predecessors and added a host of improvements, rolling out one polished package. Square stepped away from the futuristic sci-fi themes of the prior two games, to deliver a captivating, whimsical and enchanting fantasy experience.

Final Fantasy Tactics

We're not exaggerating when we say this may be the deepest game ever. Seriously. You can spend a good hundred hours immersed in this strategy/RPG and still not have unlocked every character, skill or discovered every job combination. Even the story is deep (at times inaccessibly so). And we can't forget that Tactics boasts one of the finest music scores on the PS one.

Front Mission 3

It's like Final Fantasy Tactics, but with robots! Front Mission 3's strategic turn-based battles allow you to target specific areas of opponents' mechs, adding some serious depth to this fabulous-looking RPG. The game is driving with mech-tastic details that'll thrill fans of fighting robots.

Gran Turismo 2

Arguably one of the finest driving games of all time on any system, with only its sequel on PS2 managing to elicit the same kind of response from gamers the world over. Gorgeous visuals, fabulous tracks, incredible driving dynamics, and a car list that covers just

about everything you'd ever want to try your hand at driving (and many you wouldn't accumulate as qualities that set GT2 in a league of its own. You can buy it cheap, too, so there's no excuse not to own it.

Hot Shots Golf

Though some fans are sure to disagree, the original Hot Shots Golf is our pick for the best golf game on the PS one. Not only is the basic engine surprisingly realistic, but the game also includes a fully fleshed-out minigolf mode and great multiplayer options, like the ability to faze your opponents with sighs or shouts of "Come on!" by hitting different buttons.

Klonoa

For pure, stripped-down gameplay at its finest, you can't do better than the original Klonoa. It never achieved mass-market success, thanks in part to its quirky mascot character and distinctly Japanese feel, but this 3D platformer-on-rails remains one of the biggest cult classics on the system.

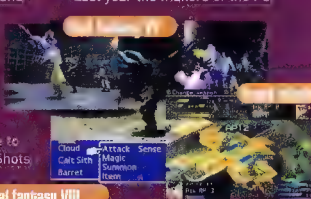
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver

Crystal Dynamics took the 3D action-adventure genre, previously dominated by the Tomb Raider series, and turned it on its ear. Even now Soul Reaver stands head and shoulders above other similar games thanks to an involving and compelling storyline, a cast of dynamic characters and visuals that are still probably the very best you'll ever see on the PS one.

Madden NFL 2001

Capturing the essence of football is as unlikely as converting a Hail

Mary pass. But it can be done. Last year the makers of the PS



one's best football series proved it was possible. The attention to detail was exact, the franchise mode led to endless replayability, and the AI toppled anything seen in the past. It's the best football game we've ever played.

Metal Gear Solid

The first Metal of Honor broke new ground by offering up lots of historical accurateness and a Hollywood-style presentation new to the first-person shooting game. The sequel went on to perfect these elements and quickly became one of our favorites on the PS one. The wonderful visual and aural stylings make it a first-rate experience.

Metal Gear Solid

More so than most other games on this list, Metal Gear Solid is one of the most significant releases the PS one has ever seen. It tells its story with such conviction, with such detail and with such incredible production values, that the proclamation of it being one of the "greatest games of all time" by fans doesn't seem too farfetched. There's a reason the sequel is anticipated to be the biggest-selling game ever—and that's because this one was so good.

for his services to gaming, you can also thank him for the LCD projection TV and the dancing lights on your stereo system.

DAVID LAU-KEE

What does he do?
He's the president of Criterion Software.

Criterion-what?
Criterion's CodeWarrior and RenderWare middleware tools are used to create a lot of the games you play. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3, MX 2002 and even this month's cover game Grand Theft Auto 3 would not have been possible without Criterion's tools.

Does he do games too?

With a recently established software division, expect to see Criterion moving fast into the world of game development. The company's first title is Burnout, the new PS2 racing game published by Acclaim.

sen. JOE LIEBERMAN

But he's that guy, right?
Democratic Senator for Connecticut. Candidate for Vice President in 2000.

Don't we hate him?

Nah. He's a leading voice in the fight to limit and regulate violence in the media, including video games. He's been a driving force for labeling content and enforcing those ratings. Some see his efforts as an important and necessary step for the video game industry, while others worry about the possibility of censorship.

More meddling?

With a solid ratings system firmly in place, Lieberman is now focusing on the marketing of games, hoping to limit the targeted advertising of mature content to children.

Did you know?

Like many advocates of restraint in the games industry, Sen.



madden nfl 2001

metal gear solid

Lieberman was spurred into action when he learned that a colleague's 9-year-old son wanted to buy *Mortal Kombat*.

Doug Lowenstein

Who is he?

President of the Interactive Digital Software Association (IDSA).

What's that?

The IDSA owns the E3 trade show—that's the fun part. But most important, the IDSA is responsible for the ESRB ratings system for video games, and is the main lobbying voice for the games industry. Basically, Lowenstein is your man in Washington.

What's he doing next?

What isn't he doing? Testifying in Congress, speaking to the press, developing strategies to fight software piracy and protect online gamers. This guy's a busy man!

Masato Maegawa

Rhymes with Tomato

President of *Treasure*.

Treasure is cool, right?

Treasure is a developer that has continually come up with very innovative games that are not only overflowing with imagination but also stretch the bounds of technology.

What now?

Maegawa is overseeing *Treasure*'s next batch of PS2 games: a sequel to *Radiant Silvergun* called *Project Ikaruga* and the multiplayer *Tiny Toons* party game *Conspiracy*.

Fine pedigree

Many of the employees of *Treasure* came from Konami and worked on the *Castlevania* and *Contra* series.

Yasumi Matsuno

Who is he?

The director of *Final Fantasy*

Tactics and *Vagrant Story*.

Ah! *Tactics*. Heard of that?

Tactics is one of the finest strategy/RPGs ever made. *Vagrant Story* stands out as a bold experiment in storytelling, style and gameplay.

What's he doing now?

Directing *Final Fantasy XII*. And if his history is any indication, we can expect a radically different play style along with a dark storyline and atmosphere.

Big ogre

Matsuno helped create the cult classics *Ogre Battle* and *Tactics Ogre* before leaving *Quest* to join *Square*.

Masaya Matsuura

Who?

The mastermind behind the music and gameplay of *PaRappa the Rapper*.

What's the big deal?

He's one of the most original, creative thinkers in this industry. At a time when developers are pushing the technological and graphical envelopes, Matsuura remains committed to focusing on simple gameplay that will appeal to a wide range of players.

What's he working on now?

PaRappa the Rapper 2, and probably other unique titles from his NanaOn-Sha studio.

Best game you'll never see

He also created *Vib-Ribbon*, possibly the greatest game that'll never be released here.



mikami

Shinji Mikami

Who is he?

Producer of *Resident Evil* and *Dino Crisis* series, and *Devil May Cry*.

It's all his fault!

No other single person has received more credit for popularizing the survival-horror genre.

What's he doing next?

He's already hard at work on the next batch of survival-horror games, including *Dino Crisis 3* and *Resident Evil 4*. Oh yeah, and don't be surprised if you see Dante making a return in a year or so from now.

Goofy guy

It's easy to see how Mikami's urge to create something for a more mature audience came about—his early titles included *Super NES* games like *Aladdin* and *Gool Troop*.



moore

Thank him for Sega Rally

Before creating his own game studio at Sega, Mizuguchi was the co-creator of the hit *Sega Rally* series.

Peter Moore

What does he do?

He's the president of *Sega of America*.

Why is he here?

Sega is going to be one of the major players when it comes to games for PS2. Thought their Dreamcast stuff was good? Wait 'til you see *Virtua Fighter 4* on PS2.

What's next?

Readying an aggressive assault against EA Sports with an onslaught of games, spearheaded by the Madden-busting *NFL 2K2*.

Sneaker peddler

Before working at Sega, Peter was an exec at Reebok, responsible for marketing communications for the shoemaker's global soccer and rugby divisions.

Masaya Nakamura

He's important because?

He's the chairman and founder of *Namco*.

Why should I care?

As the principle decision maker for *Namco*, *Nakamura* (*Namco* is actually an acronym for *Nakamura's Manufacturing Company*) has played a great hand in the success of the *PlayStation*. Were it not for his company's hit titles like *Tekken* and *Ridge Racer*, both the PS one and PS2 wouldn't be in the positions they are today.

Yasunori Mitsuda

Who is he?

Freelance composer.

A musician?

Mitsuda has composed the brilliant musical backgrounds for such *Square* games as *Chrono Trigger*, *Chrono Cross*, *Tobal* and *Xenogears*.

What does he do now?

Mitsuda is working on scores for a variety of games, including *Tsunagai* for *Atlus* and *Xenosaga* for *Namco*. Since he still has ties with *Square*, don't be surprised if he scores the next installment in the *Chrono* series.

I quit!

Although hired on as a composer, Mitsuda was only allowed to handle sound programming at *Square*. Fed up with the situation, he e-mailed *Square VP* Hironobu Sakaguchi saying that if he couldn't do any music, he would quit. Impressed by his spunk, Sakaguchi gave him the opportunity to score *Chrono Trigger*.

Tetsuya Mizuguchi

What does he do, then?

Head of *Sega's United Game Artists* division.

So what?

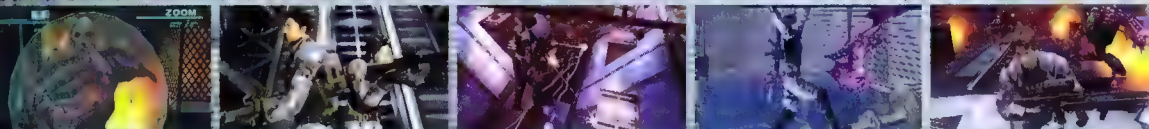
Mizuguchi and his studio are credited with giving gaming a fresh face, like *Space Channel 5*.

Are we getting more?

In addition to a new *Space Channel 5* game for the PS2, Mizuguchi and his team are hard at work on a new music-based shooter for the PS2 called *Rez*.



PlayStation 2



Blood
Violence



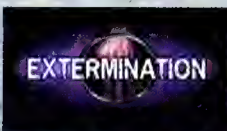
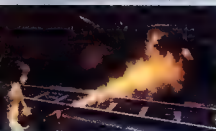
www.scea.com

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7 MILES ABOVE ANTARCTICA, A WEATHER SATELLITE SENDS BACK AN IMAGE.

Your special forces reconnaissance unit is ordered to investigate a distress signal. You arrive and discover a virus has violently mutated every living and non-living thing in its path. The mission objectives are clear: rescue survivors, secure the area and destroy the virus. If you can.



opm's top 50 PS one games

Mr. Driller

As the star of his eponymous Namco game, Mr. Driller's overall charm and dedication to eradicating evil colored blocks immediately earned our respect. The action borrows from classic games and, at the same time, makes you think in a way unlike any other game. It's a little Tetris, a little Boulder Dash, a little Mr. Do!, a little Super Mario Bros. 2. And a lot of fun!

NHL Face-Off 2001

In the wild hunt for a hockey game that mimics the fun and replayability of Sega Genesis' NHL '95, no puck action came closer to replicating the feel of that classic like 989's FaceOff. It's easily the smoothest PS one hockey experience and it was the first to truly tackle realistic puck physics like deflections and tip-ins.

Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus

If only developer Oddworld Inhabitants didn't, er, sell out to the devil and abandon the PS2 platform for the Xbox, we'd be giddy with anticipation right now for the sequel, Munch's Oddysee. But even that bitter pill won't stop us from loving Abe and his unique puzzle/platformer. The GameSpeak feature alone is reason enough to play this one.

PaRappa the Rapper

The music game that basically kicked it all off. Starring a rapping dog named PaRappa, this interactive cartoon tells the story of his quest to get the girl. Armed with the motto, "I gotta believe!" and some of the hippest rapping skills around, PaRappa will win over anyone with his hipster looks and smooth style.

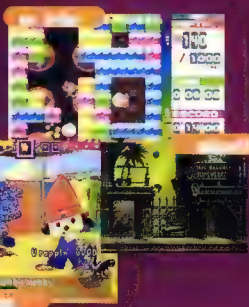
Parasite Eve II

Leave it to Square to find a way to combine survival-horror and RPG elements into a gripping adventure. A solid story, some nicely diverse locations, a selection of superb firepower and a cast of delightfully wicked enemies (most notably, the creepy, mechanical Golems) make PE2 an excellent realization of the experiment that was started with the original.

R4: Ridge Racer Type 4

R4 took the classic arcade driving experience of the Ridge Racer series and gave it a kick in the pants. It provides a thrilling racing experience and throws in a career mode so involving and compelling that it makes this almost like a driving

RPG. It may not be for everyone, but once you master the controls, start drifting your way around the tracks and win one of the many fantasy cars, it's a real thrill.



The TOP FIFTY movers, shakers and video game makers

What's he up to now?

Also serving as executive producer on many of Namco's larger games, Nakamura is currently overseeing the next batch of Namco games for the PS2: Tekken 4, Soul Calibur 2, and Ridge Racer 6.

Tight?

Even though Pac-Man is likely the most popular video game of all time,

folklore states that Nakamura only awarded the engineer responsible \$3,500 for his efforts. Disgusted, the engineer took the money and quit.

Tetsuya nomura

Who?

The character designer for Final Fantasy VII, FFXIII and FFX. Also the lead artist and character designer for the Bouncer, and has contributed design work to numerous other Square projects.

Like his stuff?

His moody, dark, technology-suffused approach to Final Fantasy marked a sharp turn away from the whimsical, fantastical worlds created by that other Final Fantasy designer, renowned anime artist Yoshitaka Amano. While hardcore FF fanboys are sharply polarized as to which designer they like better, it's quite clear that Nomura's realistic style was better suited to introduce role-playing games to the masses.

Square does Disney?

Kingdom Hearts, Square's Disney RPG, features Donald, Goofy, Dumbo

and lots of other popular characters, along with some new chaps who, through this game, will be introduced into the Disney universe.

Nomura is both director and character designer on this project.

He likes big red lion things

Nomura's favorite Final Fantasy is FFVII and fave character is Red XIII.

YOSHIKI okamoto

Remember his name

Producer at Capcom, president of Flagship.

What did he do?

As one of the creators of Street Fighter II, Okamoto deserves a good amount of respect. He's also had a hand in producing the Resident Evil, Dino Crisis and Breath of Fire games. In 1998 he started up a company called Flagship to work on scenarios for games like Devil May Cry.

More horror?

It's pretty safe to assume the next batch of survival-horror games will

feature scenarios from his group.

Naughty boy

Okamoto's first job was at Konami, where he created the game Time Pilot, a jet shooter for arcades. Interestingly, this was not the game he was supposed to make—

Okamoto's boss was adamant that he make a driving game. While secretly working on his jet shooter, he gave his boss daily updates on his progress with the non-existent driving game.

ted price

Who?

The president of Insomniac Games. Cutesy dragonpooos Insomniac is the team that brought you all three Spyro games for PS one, and are regarded as one of the most technically proficient developers for the system.

Raccoons are stunning

Insomniac is rumored to be working on a PS2 game, code-named

Raccoon. "Insiders tell us that it's absolutely "stunning." We can't wait to see it.



nomura

Resident Evil?

While the original Resident Evil showed us what Capcom meant by the term "survival horror," the sequel takes things to another level. In addition to better graphics, improved story, and the same basic look-out-for-the-zombies gameplay, the two-disc set almost served as two games in one: You had the option to play either as Claire Redfield or Leon Kennedy the first time, and your actions during the game (whether you picked up an item or not, etc.) affected the events your second time through as the other character.

RPG Maker

On the surface this game may not look like much, but looks can be deceiving. Beneath the dated graphics lurks an astoundingly powerful game-creation tool. It takes a great deal of patience to really tap RPG

Maker's potential, but if you're willing to invest a few weeks...or months...the results are well worth the effort.

Silent Hill

Though first perceived by many as a Resident Evil knockoff, those who played Silent Hill quickly came to realize it was much more. Whereas Capcom's survival-horror series features more of a jump-out-at-cha scare, Konami's entry takes a much more psychological turn, as you never really stop feeling creeped out. Have you ever been so terrified by a phone ring?

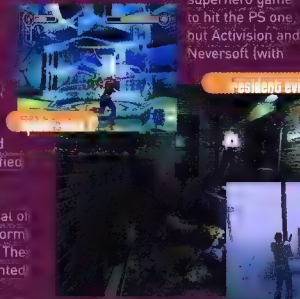
Sled Storm

While it didn't receive a great deal of fanfare upon its release, Sled Storm turned out to be a superb racer. The excellent handling is complemented by remarkably realistic course design, allowing players to find their

own shortcuts on immense mountain tracks. The wonderfully sharp graphics are nothing to sneeze at, either.

Spider-Man

It took far too long for a decent superhero game to hit the PS one, but Activision and Neversoft (with



its reliable Apocalypse/Iron Hawk/Pro Skater engine) delivered big time last year. Spider-Man throws the wall-crawler into a full 3D environment ideal for slinging, swinging, and dinging up bad guys. A great story that involves many of Spidey's toughest foes (and several allies, as well) makes this one a must for any comics fan.

Spyro 3: Year of the Dragon

While all three of the Spyro games feature some of the highest quality 3D platforming action, YTD is the best of the lot thanks to its abundance of

addictive minigames and its range of playable characters. Although Spyro offers up fun for the whole family, don't be fooled by that cutesy purple dragon—this ain't just a kiddie game.

Yo quiero Spyro The Dragon?

In the first game, the voice of Spyro was performed by Carlos Alazraqui, who was also the voice of the chihuahua in the Taco Bell ads.

Jason Rubin

Heard of him?

He's the president and co-founder of Naughty Dog.

What's he big for?

Two worst: Crash Bandicoot. The man knows a good game when he sees one, and has probably helped Sony sell a lot of PlayStations.

What's he doing next?

The incredible-looking Jak & Daxter: The Precursor Legacy, which should be out in time for the holidays.

Did you know?

Technically, the first Naughty Dog game (then called Jam Software), Ski Crazed for the Apple II, was programmed by Rubin in just a weekend. Baudville, the publisher of the game, paid \$250 for it. There are still 25 copies of the game in Rubin's parents' garage.

Hironobu Sakaguchi

Heard of him?

He's the creator and now director of the Final Fantasy games as well as the movie *The Spirits Within*.

Quite influential then, huh?

This flagship franchise is widely credited for playing a major role in the success of the PlayStation platforms. When Square announced it was bringing Final Fantasy to the PlayStation, plenty of gamers who were on the fence at that time regarding which next-gen system to buy made the final decision to flock to Sony's side.

And for his next trick...

Working on FFXI, the first online Final Fantasy and the killer app to launch Square's PlayOnline network.

Spending millions wisely

Although *The Spirits Within* was a big-time box-office flop, Sakaguchi used a sizable portion of the reported \$140 million investment in the movie to create a \$45 million computer graphics studio in Honolulu.

Barry Schuler

Barry who?

The CEO of AOL.

So?

AOL will be the easiest way to get your PS2 online this holiday season. It's not the only way, but as the biggest Internet Service Provider (ISP) in the world, it's a significant partner for Sony and the PS2.

What's he doing next?

Helping suck all elements of the AOL Time Warner empire into a giant online resource—and then making it so you can access that stuff from anywhere.

AOL is quite large, y'know

AOL Time Warner owns tons and tons of entertainment and media companies, including HBO, TNT, Cartoon Network, CNN, Moviefone, The WB, Warner Music and numerous others.

Yoji Shinkawa

Who?

Artist at Konami's Tokyo Design Studio.



PUBIN

Why should I care?

Metal Gear Solid's excellent visual design and characters came from Shinkawa. He also designed the great-looking mechs in Z.

What's he working on now?

Shinkawa is currently working night and day on Metal Gear Solid 2. Beyond that, he says he'd sometime like to do the art for a space racing game.

the TOP FIFTY

movers, shakers and video game makers



SUZUKI

It helps to be this good

Shinkawa had originally designed a bunch of ninja soldiers to be in MGS, aside from the standard genome soldiers. Kojima really liked one of Shinkawa's ninja sketches and decided to make him one of the game's main characters.

ADRIAN SMITH

The Iron Maiden guitarist?!

Awesome!

No, the operations director at Core Design.

Shame. What does he do, then?

Smith is Lara Croft's chief leashholder. He's headed up all of the Tomb Raider projects and has been with Core Design since the beginning.

Is he still doing Lara stuff?

The next-generation Lara game is still without a title, but we do know that the Tomb Raider moniker will no longer be used, and the storyline will be darker.

Humble beginnings

Core Design began in 1988 with just eight people and \$25,000. Twelve years later they've made their flagship Tomb Raider series a billion-dollar industry and have sold more than 25 million copies of the games in the series.

YU SUZUKI

They make motorcycles and that mad car in GT3, don't they?

No, he's the head of Sega's AM2 Division.

AM-what?

The list of this man's hit games is massive, ranging from Space Harrier to After Burner to Daytona USA. He is now working on Virtua Fighter 4, exclusively for the PS2.

What's he doing next?

In addition to VF4, his Ferrari F355 arcade title is being ported to the PS2. Then look for Suzuki to bring other franchises like Shenmue to the PS2.

Did you know?

Suzuki loves cars. He drives his red Ferrari to work every day.

TOMMY TALLARICO

He's that music and sound guy, right?

What's he done that I've heard?

You've probably heard more of his work than anyone else's, including the sounds for Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, Spider-Man, and Time Crisis: Project Titan.

What's next?

He's just finished the soundtrack for Maximo, then he's tuning up for Activision's Street Hoops and the next Evil Dead game.

Dude looks like a lady

Tommy's distant cousin is Steven Tyler of Aerosmith. Steven was originally born Steven Tallarico and later changed his name to Tyler.

GREG THOMAS

Never heard of him?

The president of Visual Concepts.

Did you know?

Still never heard of him? When it comes to sports guys in the gaming industry, Greg

Thomas is leading the charge. He's overseeing the soon-to-be-released triple-A titles NFL 2K2 and NBA 2K2, as well as all other 2K2 franchises.

What's next?

Get out a pen and paper to jot down these future blockbusters: Tennis 2K2, NHL 2K2, MLB 2K2.

Did you know?

Greg knew he was going to make games since he picked up an Atari 2600 in 1977.

NOBUO UEMATSU

How do you pronounce that?

noo-BOO-on uoh-MAI-too

The composer for all the Final Fantasy games.

Have you heard his stuff?

If not, we'll spare you all those fruity adjectives and just say that his tunes are real good. Good enough to stand up to today's best movie composers, like John Williams, and be named by Time magazine as one of the top innovators in the music industry.

He's doing the next one, right?

Having recently finished up the soundtrack for FFX, he's already working on the score for FFXII.

No training whatsoever

Largely self-taught, he has no formal training. "Truthfully speaking, I have never had proper education in music, can't play instruments well, and take a long time to read music," he told us. He also has a beagle named Pao.

KAZUNORI YAMAUCHI

Remember his name

He's Mr. Gran Turismo. Have you heard of it? It's quite good.

What else has he done?

Hmm...let's see. Gran Turismo, Gran Turismo 2 and Gran Turismo 3.

What's he doing next?

Gran Turismo 4? Which will almost certainly be an online game with zillions of cars. The eventual aim, we've heard, is for

OPM'S TOP 50 PS ONE GAMES

Street Fighter Alpha 3

An offshoot of the Street Fighter series, the Alpha games have always contained better playability and superior artistic style. Capcom did an excellent job porting Alpha 3 to the PS one, cramming in much of the arcade version's graphics and animation, while minimizing typical annoyances like loading times. Overall, this is one of the best 2D fighters ever made.

Suikoden II

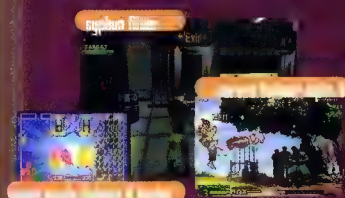
It's not often that we can say an RPG is just, well, fun to play, but the Suikoden series fits that description to a T. The battle system is fast and straightforward, the game features more than 100 different playable characters, the story is easy to follow, and the music is absolutely fantastic. But most of all, Suikoden II is a game easily enjoyed by both RPG newbies and veterans alike.

Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo

While the one-player mode may not have the depth of some other puzzle games, the fast-paced two-player mode [true to its Capcom fighter roots] is arguably the best of the genre. The system allows the skilled player to set up intricate combos, forcing contestants to play with strategy and finesse.

Syphon Filter

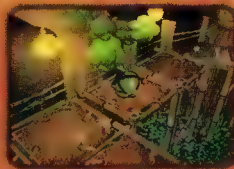
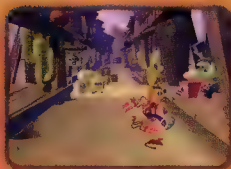
One of the most successful PS one games ever released, and with good reason, Syphon Filter's storyline wouldn't be out of place in an action flick, while the production values helped elevate the standards expected from action titles on the PlayStation. Gamers took to the hero Gabe Logan with such enthusiasm that the mere mention of the franchise name still gets folks excited.



PlayStation.2



THIS TIME, CRASH IS GOING TO NEED
ALL THE HELP HE CAN GET.



Crash. Harder.

The standard is back. With faster movement, mind-blowing graphics and stellar victories to live up to, Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath of Cortex is going to be just like the good old days, only better.

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The TOP FIFTY

movers, shakers and video game makers

The game to simulate every car known to man. Seriously.

Did you know?

Mr. Yamauchi likes to smoke. A lot. It seems fairly apparent that he's also quite a big fan of cars.

SHIGERU YOKOYAMA

Who is he?

Producer at Namco

What's he up to?

Next to Gran Turismo there's one other big racing franchise that really helped define the PlayStation. Ridge Racer. As producer of this series, Yokoyama has helped it continually evolve and push the limits of what the PS one's hardware can do.

What's he doing next?

Sitting on the board of directors at Namco's recently established Monolith Software, Yokoyama is



YAMAUCHI

overseeing the development of the highly anticipated RPG, Xenosaga. He's also hard at work on Ridge Racer 6 for the PS2.

And on the side...

He's also served as producer on a couple of Pac-Man titles.

SHUHEI YOSHIDA

Who-hey and the what now?

Vice president of product development, Sony Computer Entertainment America.

Why should I care?

He's the man in charge of all the cool stuff we're seeing from Sony these days like the awesome Twisted Metal: Black and Ico. He's also the man who gets to give that cool stuff the thumbs up. He seems to be quite

What's he doing next?

That's a hard one to say. He's got a lot of games in development, many of which will stretch the online side of the PS2.

Did you know?

When the PS2 launched, the only first-party game available was Fantavision. Yoshida has brought things a long way in just one year, as

many of the "must-buy" games for the PS2 are now developed by Sony (Twisted Metal: Black, Dark Cloud, Gran Turismo 3).



YOSHIDA

OPM'S TOP 50 PS ONE GAMES

Tekken 3

The only fighting game you truly need on PS one. Some games are declared "classics" simply because they do things differently, or refine ideas to near-perfection. Tekken 3 does this and so much more. It provides the purest, deepest and most involving 3D fighting game imaginable, and has weathered challenges from contenders without suffering so much as a bruise. Gorgeous graphics, fantastic controls and a rewarding structure ensure that this is fun whether you play it alone or against a buddy.

Tomb Raider II

While the original game broke new ground for 3D adventures, it's the sequel's addition of vehicles and more diverse locations that make it the best of the series. Some may appreciate Tomb Raider III for its sharper graphics and more realistic settings, but in terms of balance and

gameplay, we say TR2 is clearly the best of the bunch.

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

Easily one of the greatest games to grace the PS one, THPS2 has pinpoint control, unending creativity, a deep and consuming career mode and a brilliant skatepark editor. Anything that was lacking in the original was remedied tenfold in this stunning sequel.

Twisted Metal 2

This took the genre-busting concepts of the first game and refined them to such an extent that the game has since become regarded as an all-time classic. Despite two spectacularly inferior sequels (by a different development team), the quality of TM2 kept the flame of the franchise alive to such an extent that Twisted Metal: Black was welcomed with open arms when gamers learned that the original team would be back for another game.

Wipeout XL

Crammed with cutting-edge graphics and futuristic fonts, Wipeout XL simply exudes style. And the arcade racing gameplay is pretty addictive too. Add in a techno and ambient house soundtrack featuring some high-profile musicians like the Chemical Brothers, and the game just continues to rock. All the Wipeout games have been awesome, but XL, with its sharp style and killer weaponry, is the best of the bunch.

WWF SmackDown! 2

SmackDown! 2 managed to capture the anything-can-happen spirit of the WWF in a fashion never before seen. From week to week WWF affiliations change and superstar rivalries advance or subside. Know Your Role captured it all. Lots of WWF superstars and all of their adrenaline-pumping finishing moves.

Xenosaga

A deep, long (70 hours!), story-driven RPG that tackles some of the weightier issues out there—like, oh, the sometimes-malevolent role of reli-

gion in our lives. Top that off with two unique turn-based combat systems—one built on hand-to-hand martial arts fighting, the other featuring giant mecha—and you've got yet another winner from Squaresoft.

You Don't Know Jack

Before hitting your favorite 32-bit console, Berkeley's hilarious You Don't Know Jack series—the game show where "high culture and pop culture collide"—was huge on PCs. The two-disc PS one version ports the PC's Volume 3, adding an additional 600 PlayStation-exclusive questions to the initial 800.



GIII

EXTREME G RACING

IN THE FUTURE...
WHAT'S BETWEEN YOUR LEGS
IS ALL THAT COUNTS.



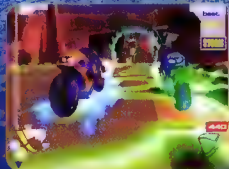
Your pulse quickens. Your stomach drops. You feel it in your toes. With an intense 60+ FPS frame rate and razor-sharp graphics, GIII is super-charged, gravity-defying combat motorcycle racing that will blow your mind. But it's how your parents make you sit down and shut-down it.



12 different super-charged bikes packing serious firepower



9 incredible racing circuits with gut-wrenching loops, twists, spirals & drops



Futuristic, interactive racing environments: city, desert, arctic, ocean & canyon



Mild Violence



PlayStation 2

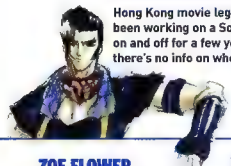


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Soul Calibur Movie?

Hong Kong movie legend Sammo Hung has been working on a Soul Calibur movie project on and off for a few years now. Although there's no info on when it'll actually release, word has it he's interested in getting Jackie Chan to star.



ZOE FLOWER

BEAUTIFUL STRANGER

For days I've been gearing up for a colossal rant of a column, psyching myself up to pour my heart into another article bound to change the face of video game-dom as we know it. Maybe I'm just tired of waiting for MGS2, but I've been feeling grumpy about video games lately. I was about to mount my soapbox when I heard the familiar chime of my inbox. The glaring envelope crouched on the corner of my desktop taunts me to click, to read the latest piece of spam. Appeasing my curiosity, I find a message from a complete stranger, on another continent, who had read one of my columns and felt the need to send his feedback.

How the *Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine* managed to reach Russia is perhaps another column altogether. Maybe my bad mood made me vulnerable at that moment, but this one beautiful letter from a stranger changed me from scowling, scathing journalist to a grinning idiot. This anonymous author scripted insight into how games have affected his life, have provided joy and opportunity for his children, reminding me just how powerful electronic entertainment can be.

I started to realize how varied the community of people affected by video games really is. I have received letters from herpetologists, lawyers, radio producers, teenagers, Armed Forces corporals, parents, teachers and game designers, all with individual stories and opinions. And this bond isn't limited to letter writing. Being passionate about games makes you a member of a not-so-secret society where the special handshake travels in the form of levels, codes and parallel experiences.

Last year I was stuck at the U.S.-Canada border (one of many occasions they know me quite well now) because my British passport was missing some stamp or another (ahhh, the trivia...I'm not Canadian after all). I was pleading unsuccessfully with the burly customs agent to let me pass. He proceeded to interrogate me, stoic and menacing as he inquired about my career. Suddenly, when he learned of my video game ties, he dropped the evil facade, becoming a fully animated grinning idiot, now playing me for Quoake II tips. Moments later he is escorting me through the gates to home soil True story.

I've given video games to children, only to watch their faces light up with joy. I've played games with people whose language I cannot speak, and yet we can smile and share the same experience. I have traveled the world, made friends, gained respect, all because of my love of video games. From mysterious benefactors replacing a child's stolen PS2, to a teenager who lost his parents in a tragic accident and found solace in role-playing games with parental figures, the stories go on and I never tire of reading them.

These strangers' own tales remind me how art and entertainment can influence and unite different folks, can build friendships, cross borders, and transcend language, gender and race. It is a truly surprising result that perhaps was never expected, but which pushes the industry to grow around the world.

And I've been reminded of how special that is, thanks to a beautiful stranger.

Zoe Flower was clearly inspired by Madonna this month. And Russian name. She's a multimedia superstar, with TV, Web and print credits to her name. She's English, lives in Canada, and has a Web site with a picture of a mouse and a flower on it at www.zoeflower.com



The Soul Still Burns

Namco's next fighting-game sensation is finally revealed

Well, here it is folks, the title that just about every die-hard fighting-game fan has been waiting for: Soul Calibur

And because the game is running on the PS2-based board, we can assume the graphics will be spectacular.

2 (the sequel to Soul Calibur, which in turn is the sequel to Soul Blade). Set to hit arcades and the PS2 early next year, SC2 is being created with one goal in mind: to raise the bar set by the original. Not an easy task when you consider how awesome that game is.

"We are working day and night, trying so hard to make this a far better game than the previous title," project leader Koh Onda told us. He and his team have been slaving away on Soul Calibur 2 since last November, and it's now about halfway finished. But Onda says that since they're using Sony's PS2-based system 246 arcade board, things are progressing smoothly. "We think the System 246 hardware is really good—the more you get used to it, the easier it is to get a handle on."

Right now, Onda and his team are concentrating on details like lighting effects and the weapon movements. Onda promises that these, along with other subtle effects, will "tickle gamers' emotions subliminally."

Surely pleasing fans, Onda also reveals that SC2 will feature a soundtrack from the same composer who scored the original.

As for how the game will play, Onda is tight-lipped, not wanting to give away too much yet. However, he did reveal that the team has significantly expanded the fighting arenas and has put in walls. "In order to add to the features of a running/action fighting game, it was only fitting to look into expanding the fields and using walls as part of the combat," he says.

At this point SC2 certainly sounds like it could live up to its proud heritage. Proof will be in the play, though. And for that, we can't wait



OCTOBER CALENDAR

1 MONDAY • WWF SmackDown! Just Bring It (PS2) Well, it's Monday, but at least you can grapple and pile-drive your way into the week, and the month.	2 TUESDAY • Formula 1, Guilty Gear X, Mobile Suit Gundam: Zeonic Front, Okage and Dragon Rage. Racing, giant robots and dragons! What else could a boy want?	3 WEDNESDAY • Gwen Stefani (1969) turns 32. Ouch.	5 FRIDAY • Annie's new flick, Collateral Damage, is released. He plays a fireman. • Hockey great Mario Lemieux (1965) is now 36.	12 FRIDAY • Bandits, starring Bruce Willis and Billy Bob Thornton, opens.	16 TUESDAY • Gitaroo Man, Giants: Citizen Kabuto, Kinetic, Herdy Gerdy and Devil May Cry all give you a very good reason to go to a game store.
19 FRIDAY • From Hell, based on Alan Moore's comic book, starring Johnny Depp. • Waiting Life, featuring very funky "CG over live action" animation, also in theaters.	20 SATURDAY • Snoop Dog (1972) turns 29. His new movie <i>Bones</i> hits theaters four days later.	23 TUESDAY • NFL 2K2, Ace Combat 4 and Grand Theft Auto III are all released today.	26 FRIDAY • K-PAX, Kevin Spacey's "is he an alien or isn't he?" movie, in theaters.	28 SUNDAY • Bill Gates (1955) turns 40.	30 TUESDAY • Half-Life, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3, 18-Wheeler, Time Crisis 2, Crash Bandicoot, FIFA 2002 all hit PS2 on the same day.

Gwen Stefani photo: Wire Image/Michael Caulfield
 Snoop Dog photo: Wire Image/Steve Grantz
 Billy Bob Thornton photo: Wire Image/Jeff Vessa

All dates are correct as of press time. Any inaccuracies have nothing to do with us, although we're pretty certain the birthdays are correct. Stop reading this now and go back to the big words, see?



**SIX-MAN TAG TEAM
WHIPS CROWD INTO
FRENZY**



**THE
SMACKDOWN! NEWS**

Where Anything's Possible

THE UNDERTAKER



**INFLECTS
PAIN WITH
THE CHOKESLAM**



Mild Language
Violence

World Wrestling Federation

PlayStation.2

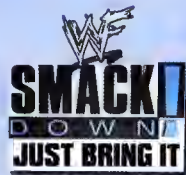
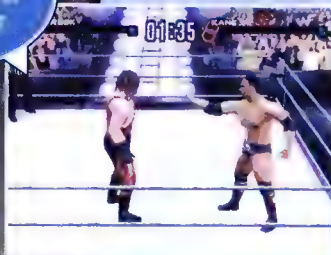


TAZZ™ AND MICHAEL COLE CALL **THE RINGSIDE ACTION**



The Rock™ wants
Fans™ with
regard it

**Chaos
spills
out
onto
the
streets!**



ALL THIS
AND MORE
IN...





FAME GAME? SSX TRICKY

EA Big spreads its celeb wings with some of today's hottest stars

Ready or not, celebrities are mounting a massive assault on what may be the last great media frontier, with EA Big's *SSX Tricky* being just the latest to bring a host of hot names to your PS2. The use of celebrity voices in games is beginning to catch on, but never before have so many celebrities offered themselves for the same title.

And we're not talking bottom of the barrel with the stars of *Tricky*. These are big-time movers and shakers from film, music and television. You've got *The Mummys* bombshell Patricia Velazquez, *Atly McBest!* knockout Lucy Liu, and *Scream* star David Arquette, just to name three. But the question is bound to arise sooner or later, so we asked *SSX* creator Larry LaPierre sooner: Isn't the use of celebrities in games superfluous?

"I agree that using celeb'ry talent usually comes across as superfluous—primarily because it tries to be focus for the game and never really delivers anything

tangible. The talent we chose to work with was an effort to get the best possible voice and performance for the characters that we had designed."

Good point, particularly in the case of *Tricky*. Whereas the original *SSX* had limited characterization, the new

version is all about personality. That's why the voices fit in swimmingly. Each character's depth is achieved through vocal nuance, which makes it that much more satisfying when you're taunting your opponents.

"Our eyes were opened to the ability of this game to appeal to the female audience"

Each character has a unique relationship with the other characters," says LaPierre. "We have gone to great lengths to ensure you get strong insight as to who your

friends and your rivals are through short interactions at the start gate and after the finish line."

With the spotlight on characters it seems that both *SSX* and, now, *Tricky* are focusing on broadening their audience beyond the hardcore gamer. The whole EA Sports Big brand is heading toward that end. "Our eyes were opened to the ability of this game to appeal to the female audience even as we played preliminary builds with our wives and girlfriends," says LaPierre. "Tricky continues this by creating even more elements that appeal to specific audiences."

Musically, it's also catering to a variety of niche



THE STARS OF SSX: TRICKY
Clockwise from above: Oliver
Platt, Billy Zane, Patricia Velazquez, David
Arquette, Macy Gray, Lucy Liu.

audiences. Check out this list of contributors: Run-D.M.C., Mix Master Mike, Lee Coombs, Rahzel, Plump DJ's, BT, Huda Hudia, Space Raiders, Aphrodite, Tsunami One, The Forth, Rasmus, Skank, Hybrid and Shocore.

But enough about the star power. We're dealing with a highly anticipated sequel here. So, what about the subtitle? How did "Tricky" come about? "It was inspired by two key elements. First, we were a little surprised by how many people picked up SSX and wanted to focus just on tricks. We had primarily designed SSX and the tracks as a race game, with tricks," LaPierre says. "On a scale of one to 10, we felt we had a racing game at about an eight and a focused trick experience at a six. This year we were able to focus our design efforts to create a race experience that's a 10 and a trick environment that's a 10, as well. Hence the name SSX Tricky."

This time, the battling can be as important as the tricks and the racing as well. "Your motivation to use combat as a strategic element is much stronger because you're rewarded with a full adrenaline bar when you successfully knock a competitor down," says LaPierre. "Also, we implemented a dynamic aggression and tolerance system that determines the probability of another rider trying to whack you as you get close to one another. As you decide to play more aggressively you provoke reactions from the other riders through their tolerance for you and your actions."

Another handful of new features will be making their debut as well—but a few rumored additions were cut. "We managed to add a time challenge mode in this year and a new trick tutorial system, as well as making the courses different for showoff and race events," LaPierre says. "The minigames we designed ended up being scaled back so far that they lost their appeal. So we dropped them. We'll dust them off for SSX 3."

THE KINGS OF ROCK

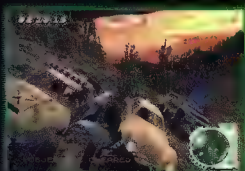
When EA Big decided on a subtitle for their update of SSX, it was a no-brainer to license the older-than-old-school stylings of hip-hop lyricists Run-D.M.C. If you're having a hard time remembering some of their biggest hits, here's a short list: "It's Like That," "The King of Rock," "Walk This Way" and "Rock Box." So what have the "Kings of Rock" been up to? They released the album *Grand Royal* this year with help from some of the top rappers in the biz.



Photos: Michael Shapiro/PhotoDisc; Rahzel: Getty Images; Oliver Platt: John Corcoran; Billy Zane: Michael Ochs; Patricia Velazquez: David LaRocca; David Arquette: David LaRocca; Macy Gray: David LaRocca; Lucy Liu: David LaRocca

PlayStation 2

SMUGGLER'S RUN 2 HOSTILE TERRITORY



The ultimate off-road driving adventure returns to the PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system this fall. Work for an elite band of smugglers delivering contraband, escaping the authorities and attacking rivals in the most volatile warzones on earth. Make the drop, hit the nitro boost and get across the border before all hell breaks loose!



RELEASE DATE FALL 2001

www.rockstarqames.com/smugglersrun2



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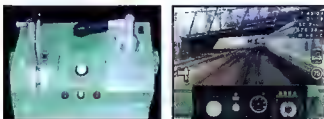


ONLY IN JAPAN

Yamanote Line Train Simulator
Sony CEJ, PS2



Given that Japan invented the iconic bullet train, you can almost understand their fascination with the rails. What you probably can't understand is their fascination with the sort of slow, plodding commuter trains that make up Yamanote Line Train Simulator. Featuring one of Tokyo's main lines, Yamanote Line does its best to put you to sleep by offering the most realistic simulation possible. So no Covert Ops-style hostage crisis, sadly. Gameplay mainly consists of starting and stopping the train, with the riveting addition of opening and closing carriage doors. Mind you, the game does look amazing. Environments are packed with detail and look almost photorealistic. Sony is also giving the full nine yards and recording real station announcements from conductors for inclusion on the DVD (aspiring train conductors can always hit mute on the TV and make their own announcements). And we can't forget the special controller. Featuring a dazzling array of three levers, four buttons and what looks like a cup holder, it's the GT Force to Yamanote Line's GT3. But really, who wants to replay their morning commute to work? Does anyone actually sit on the Yamanote Line trembling with excitement on the way home because he'll soon be able to relive it all on the PS2?



BUT WILL IT EVER COME HERE?

Never. Aside from the fact that nobody here could possibly care about a game that perfectly re-creates a rather bland part of Tokyo, there's also the fact that Japanese people—and only Japanese people—love these types of simulators. They're not all as boring as this one, though. Check out a few other Japanese sims that you'll never play:

McDonald's Monotag: Simulate working at McDonald's! Play cooking minigames! Get paid minimum wage and wear ugly clothes!

Tokyo Bus Guide: Think Yamanote Line, but on roads. In a bus. Yay?



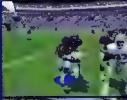



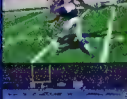





Walk the Dog: Only in the arcades right now, where it will probably stay. Unless they bring out a treadmill/leash combo controller.

Charting the Best in Pigskin

When kicking off this video-football season, don't make the mistake of buying the game with the coolest box art or your favorite athlete—unless your aesthetic mind points you toward Dante Cuppeter and Madden 2002 or Randy Moss and NFL 2K2. Basically, we're here to save you from buying a crappy football experience by giving you the low-down on the flooded market of NFL games. Below are the good (Madden, NFL 2K2, NCAA Football), the bad (QB Club, PrimeTime), and the ugly (GameDay) Down, set, hike.



AP Photo/Tim Sharp

PLAYSTATION 2		Madden NFL 2002 EA Sports Now available	Last year, Madden captivated gridiron gamers with a graphical splash never before seen. This year the gameplay caught up with the eye candy. Still, there's that annoying conservator problem which limits the game. But that's a small flaw, easily overlooked.	Madden is the best of the year. It has polish, style and a lot of extras. Watch out for NFL 2K2, though.
		NFL 2K2 Sega Sports October	NFL 2K2 was a huge hit on Dreamcast; expect similar results on the PS2. It's a lot more action-oriented than its simulation-based foes. But it manages a nice balance between arcade and sim styles. The key is that you, the gamer, control everything.	NFL 2K2 is going to change the spirit of PS2 football competition. But it won't be No. 1 just yet. Or will it?
		NFL GameDay 2002 989 Sports November	Besides some new squiggly lines on a Telestrator, GameDay isn't doing anything new. They're treading water in a Perfect Storm-like ocean. Ever since GameDay '98, fans of the series have been awash in misery. Actually, the question is: What fans?	Last year we laughed so hard we cried. This year, it just hurts us. We almost prefer the charm of the worst/first one.
		NFL QB Club 2002 Acclaim Sports Now available	The key is the Quarterback Challenge. Otherwise, you're invited to a watered-down experience that plays like high school football. Make no mistake, the QB Challenge is sweet, but this whole experience is at best a big, fun minigame.	Getting a group together for the QB Challenge is a blast. But otherwise, it's no reason to pick up this one.
		NFL Blitz 2002 Midway November	It's tough to put Blitz in the same category as these other games, and it's tough to say that Blitz on PS2 won't be a fantastic experience. Think about it: The Blitz from your neighborhood arcade machine is going to look even better on your TV. Sweet.	It's Blitz, and Blitz is irresistible. It's the perfect complement for all this simulation business. And it's real pretty-like.
		ESPN NFL PrimeTime 2002 Konami October	Every football season there's a team that surprises you. Last year, the New Orleans Saints wowed the world of football. This year, the only Cinderella we can foresee is NFL PrimeTime 2002. It's sharp, it feels good and the animations are really nice.	It's tough to compete against the vets like Madden and 2K2, but PrimeTime is prepared to be this year's Wild Card.
		NCAA Football 2002 EA Sports Now available	We had to wait a year for a decent NCAA pigskin game—but it was worth it! Everything from the Madden 2001-inspired player models, to the tough AI, to the minute details (earn helmet decals as your season progresses!) makes this one great.	With only one other college football game out this season, it's fair to say NCAA fans should go with EA Sports.
		NCAA GameBreaker 2002 989 Sports November Screen from 2001	It's easy to forget that college football fans had something before NCAA Football 2002—since GameBreaker 2001 was basically the horrible GameDay 2001 with more teams. Hopefully, they'll turn things around and make the series great again.	We'd like to say something really promising here...but we still have yet to even see a screen. Not a good sign.
		Madden NFL 2002 EA Sports Now available	Last year Madden NFL 2001 was the tightest, most fantastic football game on the PS one. But then the PS2 messed with our eyesight and we figure it's logical this game is even better, but we're only sure that it's about 100 times better than GameDay.	Better than GameDay isn't the ringing endorsement we meant it to be. A great game for PS one-only owners.
		NFL GameDay 2002 989 Sports Now available	This is the kind of game you buy so that you can remember what it was like when your father returned home from the grocery store with Taster Pops instead of Pop-Tarts. It's just a shadow of the real thing. And the real thing for PS one: Madden.	Want to ruin the day of that spoiled brat nephew of yours? GameDay will certainly do the trick (crying not guaranteed).

PS ONE

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PlayStation 2



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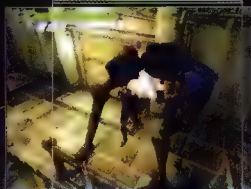
A closeup look at Capcom's newest hero

"I wanted to create a superhero who has guts and never fears, even if he faces overwhelmingly powerful enemies, with the power to back up his confidence." So comments the director of *Devil May Cry*, Hideki Kamiya, about Dante, the game's devil-hunting half-man, half-demon hero. You're about to learn a lot about him when you pick up your copy on Oct. 17 (you know you will). We thought we'd give you a head start, though, with a graphic look at the star of Capcom's latest masterpiece. So, as the man himself might say, "Let's rock."

The Other Dante



In Capcom tradition as of late, several characters in *Devil May Cry* refer to classic literature. Dante is no exception, sharing his name with the 13th/14th-century Italian author of *The Divine Comedy*.



Nondiscriminatory Guns

Two handguns, *Ebony* and *Ivory*, work together in perfect harmony...if by "in perfect harmony" you mean blowing each demonic entity back to hell—with pure equality, of course.

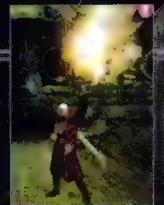
The Voice



Dante's suave, collected voice comes courtesy of a Canadian actor named Ray Coombs. You may have seen him on *Animorphs*, *Due South* or *The Relic Hunter*. But we're guessing you haven't.

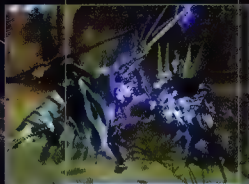
The Inspiration

Dante was inspired by Cobra of manga/anime fame. "He never fears his enemies and always looks perfectly confident," says Kamiya of the space-adventuring character. "Even in trouble, he talks to his enemies with lots of irony."



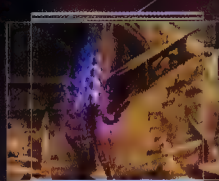
Dante's Boomstick

Dante's so cool, he handles his shotgun with only one hand. Bam!



The Lightning Blade

Once Dante equips the Alastor sword, it grants him not only superhuman speed and aerial capabilities, but also the ability to transform into his demon self—and wreak some serious havoc.



Dante's Duds

"I gave Dante a long coat to make his intense action look even cooler," says Kamiya. "Also, the reason why his costume is red is that it is traditionally the color for heroes in Japan."

What you lack in talent, you can make up for in volume.

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PLAYSTATION UNDERGROUND POLL

Are cheats fair?

15% NO, YOU'RE EITHER HARDCORE OR NOT

17% ONLY IF I'M REALLY STUCK

68% I NEED TO KNOW EVERYTHING IN A GAME

Total Responses: 16,924.

JOHN SCALZI

BAD PARENTS, GOOD INFO

Here's an interesting letter I got from a reader who intelligently questions one of the aspects of what I do as GameDad when I review games for parents:



"GameDad,

"I appreciate the effort made toward informing parents about the games their kids are playing, but isn't it possible that you're sponsoring the inhibition of mature children from playing entertaining games? Many paranoid parental units are out there who would rather let the media tell them how their kids will respond to violent games and movies than actually look at their children and determine how they respond to mature entertainment. It is my observation (and my experience) that many children have a firmer grip on reality than adults give them credit for."

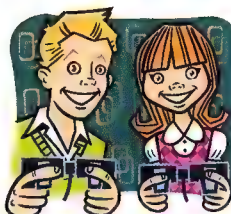
The answer to this is yes—I do expect that there are some parents who will read my reviews of games and, without further thought, use them to bar their kids from certain titles. If nothing else, it's easy to do: I've played the game, I'm an adult, I seem to know what I'm talking about. Why not trust me? Also, let's face it, if you don't actually spend a lot of time playing games (and many parents don't), they can be confusing. I enjoy showing *OPM* to some older adult friends of mine, who get lost trying to figure out the magazine's layout. If they can't follow the magazine, following the games themselves may be just hopeless.

So yes, some parents will use GameDad reviews unthinkingly, just like they use ESRB ratings, or movie ratings, or parental advisory stickers on CDs. But the alternative is that they don't use these ratings at all—either by not paying attention to what their kids are playing or watching or listening to (which is not very good parenting), or by simply barring any game, CD or movie that they think they might not like (which is not very good parenting, either, and a lot tougher on the kids). At the very least, as a reviewer I try to give context, and I also absolutely encourage parents to actually spend the time getting to know their kids. They're the ones who know (or should know) the maturity level of the humans they're charged with helping to grow up.

My position is that GameDad, or any review or rating that purports to "help" parents, is not the end of the parental responsibility when it comes to games or any other media. It's the beginning—and smart parents use them in combination with their own moral and cultural preferences, along with the maturity level of their own kids. I can't help it if some parents prefer to use my reviews without any additional thinking. But I know that the parents who do choose to think about these things are glad to have the kind of starting point that reviews like mine can provide. That's a good reason to keep going.

John Scalzi is a freelance writer and media critic who also runs GameDad, a video game site for parents. Visit it at www.gamedad.com.

PLAYSTATION APTITUDE TEST



1. What was the name of the main character in the original Grand Theft Auto?

- a. Clive
- b. Claude
- c. Claus
- d. John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt

2. In Grand Theft Auto III, the Don, Salvatore Leone, is voiced by what actor?

- a. Joey Pantoliano
- b. Frank Vincent
- c. Michael Madsen
- d. Michael Rapaport

3. What is the name of Final Fantasy music composer Nobuo Uematsu's dog?

- a. Ubu
- b. Brian
- c. Kung
- d. Pao

4. Which of this month's review games is free of poultry?

- a. Tiny Toons: Plucky's Big Adventure
- b. Crossroad Crisis
- c. Gadget Racers
- d. Spy Hunter

5. Who is the character Trish in Devil May Cry named after?

- a. The Lord of the Demons in Eastern Mythology
- b. The writer Dante's real-life love
- c. The main character in John Milton's *Paradise Lost*
- d. Trisha Yearwood

6. You can hear Saliva's remix of the "Peter Gunn Theme" in Spy Hunter. But who wrote the original?

- a. John Williams
- b. Irving Berlin
- c. Burt Bacharach
- d. Henry Mancini

7. Ifrit in Final Fantasy VIII: Guardian Force :: Ifrit in Devil May Cry ::

- a. Lightning sword
- b. Fire gauntlet
- c. Powerful gun
- d. That name of the devil that might shed a tear

8. The monster you are looking at is a:

- a. Mocchi
- b. Monol
- c. Suez
- d. Momo



9. Who of the following is not a known member of the Castlevania universe's Belmont clan?

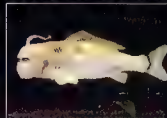
- a. Simon Belmont
- b. Trevor Belmont
- c. Eric Belmont
- d. Sonia Belmont

10. Which of these villains appears both in Spider-Man 2 and next year's Spider-Man: The Movie Game?

- a. Vulture
- b. Shocker
- c. Venom
- d. Green Goblin

DATA STREAM

Loads of Seaman



Sega is making a PS2 sequel to its Dreamcast virtual sea-creature game Seaman. Using a special controller with a built-in microphone, the game lets you talk to and play with your Seaman.

Control Freaks



Ascali's new PS2 controller in Japan has a button configuration that's tailored for fighting-game fans. There's no word yet on when it'll come here.

Midway's Shadow

Although Legion has been delayed until June, Midway will bring the hot PS2 RPG Shadow Hearts here in spring.

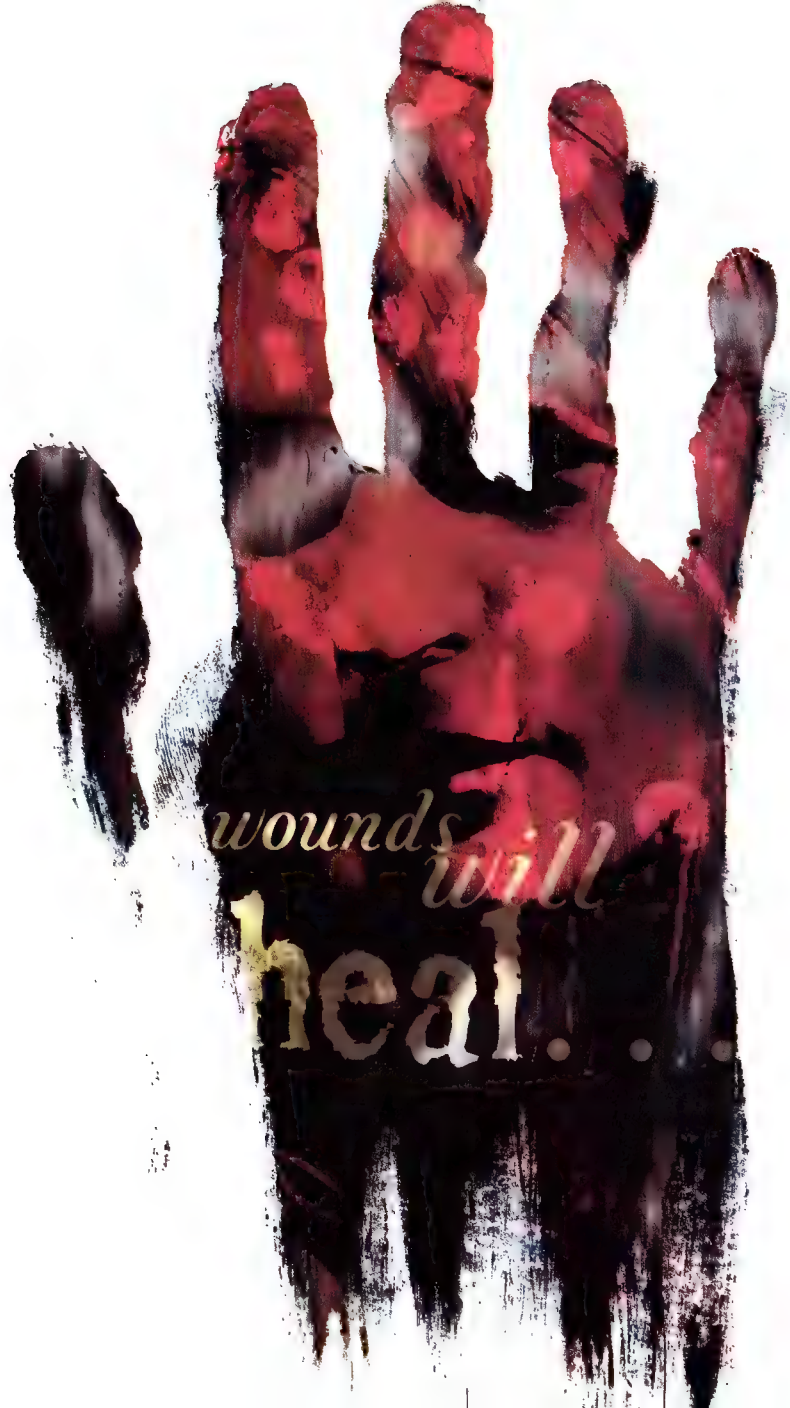
New PS2 Survivor

Capcom will release Resident Evil: Gun Survivor 2 on the PS2 next year. The game will be GunGun-compatible.

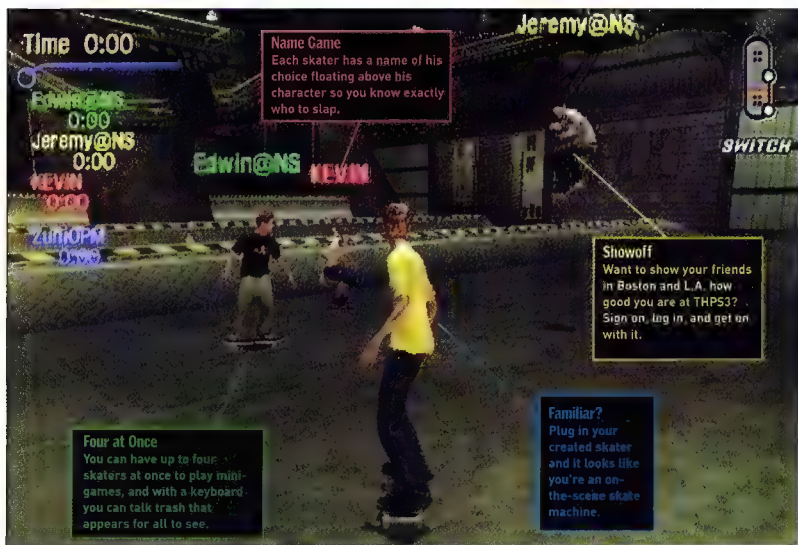
Answers
1. b. Claude
2. c. Michael Madsen
3. d. Pao
4. a. Tiny Toons: Plucky's Big Adventure
5. b. The writer Dante's real-life love
6. c. Burt Bacharach
7. c. Powerful gun
8. a. Mocchi
9. d. Sonia Belmont
10. c. Venom

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wounds will
heal...



An Online Chat With Neversoft

OPM: What will being online bring to the Tony Hawk's Pro Skater experience?

JJ: Jettett, Neversoft president: Well it might bring Tony into your living room, for one thing. Tony has been helping us test the game from his house. Last night my kid played against Tony's son Riley for a while, then we took turns where our kids would play for half a round of Graffiti, then Tony and I would jump in for the second half. It was a blast. So who knows—you never know when you might run into Tony online. He's pretty into it.

OPM: What's it like being able to play online at the Neversoft offices?

JJ: I tell you, people start off an online session with their keyboards in their laps, hanging out, chatting, pulling a few tricks. Then, pretty soon, the games start and you barely have time to fire off some smack talk before everyone wants to restart for another game. Pretty soon you look up and the sun is rising.

OPM: How big of a leap is online for THPS3?

JJ: It's not a leap. It's the most natural next step for this game. THPS was made for Internet play. So much so that we just had to make it happen for this iteration of the game. If you don't want to get addicted to it, then you better hope you don't even see it over at your buddy's house. If you do, it's all over for you, man. You will be laying down the ethernet cable and parking yourself in your living room until we do another version of the game. Hell, you might be stuck there forever. There is no escape from the Hawk.

OPM: Bam Margera was the only skater addition with this new version of the game. Why was he the sensible choice?

JJ: "Sensible" and "Bam" in the same sentence? Bam is a great skater and he is entertaining as hell. Most importantly, the guy is about having fun, which is perfect for our game. He has a special move called the "Jackass." He catches big air, then slams his own face with the board. Blood splats all over the place. I can just sit around pulling that move all night; it makes me laugh my ass off.

OPM: Could you explain the new trick system where you don't have to ollie between them?

Scott Pease, THPS3 producer: We've added a ton of hidden branching combos—almost like a fighting game—so while you're balancing in a lip trick, manual or grind, you can experiment and find ways to transition smoothly into other tricks of the same nature. This leads to some awesome freestyle combos: get in a Truckstand, take it to a rail, bust a Railflip, flick it to Casper. The combos are endless, as are the points, and thus, the trash talking.

OPM: Will there be any surprise skaters?

JJ: Come on. You don't think we would ship a game without surprises, now, do you?

www.THPS3.com

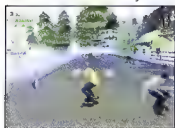
We play online against the makers of Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

Shame on us for thinking that Neversoft and Activision would just up the graphics ante for the latest Tony Hawk. We'll concede that we were looking forward to a surplus of new environments, seamless animations and a laundry list of time-sapping goals. But we couldn't have envisioned the greatest leap that THPS3 is taking, and it's not the 1080°. Neversoft is bringing THPS3 to cyberspace.

Skating online with the makers of the best skateboarding game ever is an invitation for pain. These guys are good! The server holds up to four skaters at a time, and the slowdown was so minimal that it really wasn't a bother. THPS3 will feature four different online multiplayer games. Here they are—and here's how *OPM* fared:

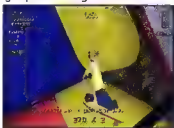
Graffiti

Born from the first THPS, this mode focuses on performing tricks on anything and everything until objects turn your skater's color. You can "steal" if you do a



trick worth more points than the one your opponent did.

Vs. Neversoft (3/10): We were used to a simple two-color scheme, but with four people it's like playing in a kaleidoscope. Forget the reds and blues of the originals—now there's yellow and green as well. As for how we fared, we were ruined by the pretty colors and our inability to get points for gruesome bails.



Trick Attack

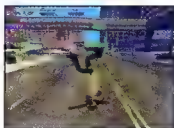
Also from the original THPS, Trick Attack is all about scoring big points in the allotted time.

Vs. Neversoft (2/10):

Complaining over the keyboard that we "didn't know the special moves" only gave the kings of skate more time to rack up points. We were awful. We were worse than awful. We've been plotting our revenge ever since.

King of the Hill

Basically a glorified game of tag. There's a crown hidden in the level. As soon as it's found, the skater wearing it slows down like he's riding a cement skateboard. The key here is to try to keep the crown. The person who "wears" it for two minutes wins out. To

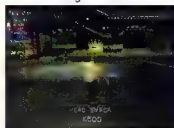


steal the crown, just "tag" the skater who's got it. His clock stops, yours begins—but if he gets it back, his clock picks up from where it left off.

Vs. Neversoft (6/10): Trying to find the right nooks and crannies for escape is no easy task, especially when new to a level. We caught on slowly, then held our heads high.

Slap!

Build momentum by doing tricks off of ramps, then use that momentum to "slap" your opponents to the ground.

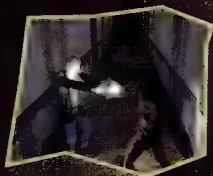


Vs. Neversoft (8/10): After laying the quick smack down, we felt like we were Tony Hawk and they were, well, us. Of course, they came on like wildfire after that



... but
your
mind
will be
scarred
forever.

SILENT HILL 2



Violence
Blood and Gore



PlayStation 2

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EYE ON LONDON

OPM travels to the U.K. for the annual ECTS show

With a much smaller venue and fewer publishers showing their wares at this year's ECTS [the European equivalent of the E3 show], the event was rather tame compared with past years. Falling between E3 and the Tokyo Game Show, ECTS doesn't seem to have much of a real purpose anymore. Still, we wandered the show's floors and found a few promising PS2 titles worth talking about.

Leading the pack was **Knights**, a game from Dutch studio Lost Boys. A fun 3D adventure, **Knights** includes such activities as snowboarding and hang gliding. Odd, yes, but amusing.

U.K.-based Rage software was also on hand, busy promoting its upcoming **Rocky** title, which allows you to open a can of whoop-ass on such familiar faces as Apollo Creed and Ivan Drago.

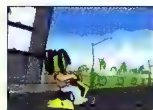
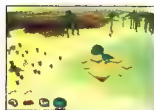
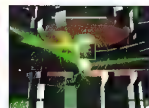
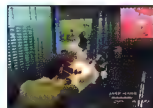
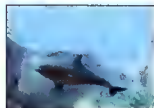
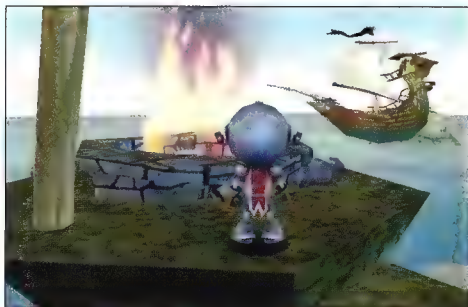
Other interesting titles at the show were an action/sports game called **Dinoz** from Vivendi Universal (yes, that's **Dinoz** with a "Z") and a

cool cel-shaded racing game called **Scooty Races** from the Italian-based Treccision.

Also noteworthy are Sony Europe's own quality titles, including the rally game **WRC** and Criterion's hoverboarder **Airblade**.

After the show itself, Sony had an event that featured a host of new games from Sega. **Headhunter**, a Syphon Filter-esque action title, was on video, while **Ecco the Dolphin** and **Rez** were both playable. Ecco's developers were able to fix some of the problems of the Dreamcast version, and it now plays much better. As for **Rez**, the game seemed to catch on well with European players thanks to its clubbing kind of feel. It was a definite hit.

EA also held its own private show for upcoming titles, but the real big news here was that the developer of **SSX** has begun work on a title called **NBX**, which will focus on extreme mountain biking. We can't wait to see this one!



Some of ECTS's highlights. At the very top is **Knights**. Clockwise from the top left: Ecco the Dolphin, **Headhunter**, **Rez**, **Rocky**, **Scooty Races** and **Dinoz**

REMOTE POSSIBILITIES



Listen up, DVD fans! Sony has finally released its official remote for the PS2. Not only does it work better than a lot of those other third-party remotes, but Sony's also comes with a driver upgrade CD that adds lots of new functions to your PS2's DVD player: Triple-speed fast forwarding and slow motion are now available, and you'll even be able to play some of the few DVDs that were previously incompatible with the PS2. The remote can even be used as a wireless controller for those interested, and is also compatible with the PS one. At \$20, it's quite a bargain.

OVERHEARD

"They are on a death march right now."

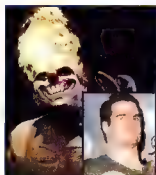
—EA chairman Larry Probst gives the *Financial Times* his take on Microsoft's Xbox plans.



DREAM CAST

twisted metal

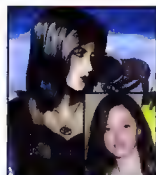
Yeah, yeah, we know. Odds are pretty freakin' slim that we'll ever see a movie version of **Twisted Metal Black**. But seeing as how developer Incoo Inc. was most inspired by movies for the creation of the game—namely *Se7en*, *Jacob's Ladder* and *Silence of the Lambs*—we can't help wondering what it might look like to see Sweet Tooth and Co. on the big screen. So, as part of our new monthly Dream Cast, we present our picks for who we wouldn't mind seeing in *Twisted Metal: Black—The Movie*. What would you like to see us cast a movie for? And who would you pick for the roles? Let us know at opm@ziffdavis.com with the subject of DREAM CAST.



Sweet Tooth: Henry Rollins
We have it on good authority that rocker Henry Rollins (seen in bad flicks like *The Chase*) is actually a pretty nice guy—but we don't believe it. He's one big hulking maniac. The perfect Sweet Tooth.



Dollface: Drew Barrymore
What ever happened to the messed-up Drew Barrymore (*Charlie's Angels*) we knew and loved back in the late '80s? As our pick for Dollface, we'll get a taste of it once more.



Raven: Rose McGowan
Did you see Rose McGowan in *Devil in the Flesh*? Talk about wacko! And she actually dated Marilyn Manson! In real life. Add the fact that she looks just like Raven, and she's definitely in.



Calypto: Vin Diesel
Vin Diesel recently demonstrated his ability to be a bad-ass in *The Fast and the Furious*. And they don't get much badder than Black's antagonist, Calypto. He's even a big PS2 fan. The role is his.



Preacher: James Cromwell



Axel: DMX



Agent Stone: Michael Jai White



No-Face: John Leguizamo



Bloody Mary: Juliette Lewis



John Doe: Ed Norton

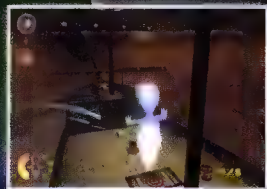
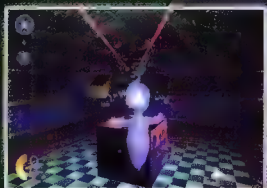
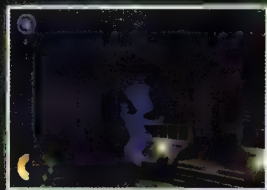


Billy Ray Stillwell: Billy Bob Thornton



Mr. Grimm: The Undertaker

The future of the spirit world
lies on your shoulders...



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Violence



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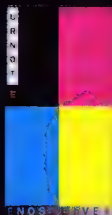


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SPIN

PLAYSTATION YEAR



Believe it or not, the PlayStation is now six years old. During the next six months we'll be looking at the most significant events in each year.

"If a computer for work is a workstation," says Ken Kutaragi in Reiji Asakura's extremely lengthy-titled book, *Revolutions At Sony: The Making of the Sony PlayStation and the Visionaries Who Conquered the World of Video Games*, "then a computer for play is a PlayStation."

The PlayStation project actually began 12 years ago, in October 1989, and it was a far cry from the system that we now know and love. Back then, Kutaragi was an engineer at Sony—and a particularly successful one. He'd already pioneered technology for LCD projection TV screens long before they resided in football-loving guys' dens across America, as well as those dancing lights that we now see on every stereo system. His charge at the time was to work with Nintendo on a pro-

ject. The task? "Super Famicom CD a PlayStation."

On May 29, 1991, the relationship was suddenly brought to an end, though. Nintendo bosses pulled the plug on the deal and jumped into bed with Philips on the fledgling and ultimately doomed CD-I format—an interactive CD player that would play rudimentary games. Philips was spearheading the CD-I format at the time, but Sony also had a CD-I research team that was developing a product which would compete with Philips' own players. The planned Sony and Nintendo PlayStation device would also be in direct competition with the CD-I players. With this in mind, Nintendo was growing increasingly concerned that its business would eventually be taken over by Sony, as the consumer-electronics giant continued to drive development on the new system. Nintendo and Philips seemed to have a common interest—they were both worried about Sony gobbling up their power and influence—so they joined forces.

Kutaragi was understandably distressed about this. Two years of his hard work had been brought to an abrupt end. The ramifications of the deal falling apart sent shock waves throughout the Sony organization, with the president of Sony Corp., Niilo Ohga, pledging in a management meeting on July 2, 1991, that "we will never withdraw from this business. Keep going!"



Ken Kutaragi

12/3/94 IN JAPAN

Three years later, on Dec. 3, 1994—10 days after Sega launched the Saturn—Sony released the PlayStation in Japan. Although not as highly anticipated as Sega's *Virtua Fighter*-aided launch, the 100,000 PlayStations that hit stores for 39,800 yen (about \$400) sold quickly, thanks in large part to Namco's awesome *Ridge Racer*.

By May 1995, the global buzz about Sony's entry into the video game market had reached fever pitch. The games industry was about to deliver the "next generation," and anticipation about Sony's launch into the U.S. was high. The first Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3), held on May 11–13, 1995, was the place everyone expected Sony to deliver—and so they did.



The ill-fated PlayStation concept for Nintendo



On the first day of E3, Sega's U.S. boss, Tom Kalinske, announced with much bravado that the U.S. launch of the Saturn would be \$399 and that—*shock!*—30,000 units were already on their way to stores. The majority of the supply would still be due later in the year, but a lucky few early adopters would be able to get one sooner. This was clearly aimed as a tactic to undermine Sony's announcements. No one was prepared for what happened next.

At Sony's press conference later that same day, Steve Race, the president of Sony Computer Entertainment America, was called to the stage. In Steve Kent's book *The Ultimate History of Video Games*, Race recalls, "I had a whole bunch of sheets of paper in my hands, and I walked up, put them down on the podium, and I just said '\$299' and

walked off the stage to this thunderous applause."

9/9/95 IN U.S.

Despite the Saturn shipping with *Virtua Fighter*, the PlayStation was clearly a better deal. On Sept. 9, 1995, the machine hit stores for the promised \$299, bundled with a demo disc containing snippets of 12 games. Sony had already sold 100,000 preorders before this date, an amount equal to what Sega had sold of the Saturn in its four-month headstart.

By November, Sega was pleased to announce that it had sold 120,000 Saturns. Sony responded with the news that, aided by excellent games like *Ridge Racer*, *Battle Arena: Toshinden*, *WipeOut*, *Twisted Metal* and *Warhawk*, the PlayStation had already sold 200,000 units and was set to have a spectacular holiday season.

Next month: Millions and millions of systems, hundreds of games, and a drop to \$199.



WipeOut



Twisted Metal



Ridge Racer



Toshinden



Warhawk

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

GOLD EDITION



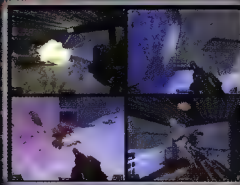
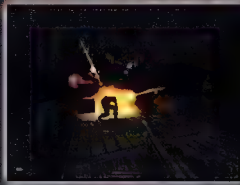
PlayStation 2

PlayStation 2

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photo by Grant/Wire image

OVERHEARD

"I grew up playing video games. PS2 takes it to the next level."

—Model/actress Carmen Electra

FALSE STARTS

When we reviewed *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* way back in issue 2, it was hard to imagine that *DreamWorks Interactive* could ever be much more than a pretty face. The graphics in that game were spectacular, but the gameplay was so terrible that it was the first to ever earn a one-disc rating in *OPM*. With *Small Soldiers* and *Tai-Fu* earning just half a disc more, things looked grim for this big-money developer. It took *Medal of Honor* to turn things around—but turn them around it did, in a big way. In fact, they've developed only one game since then that *isn't* a *Medal of Honor* title. And judging from what we've seen so far, things look like they're only getting better. We'll be featuring a similar Cinderella story of gaming every now and then. Got a suggestion? Mail it to us at opm@lifedavis.com with the subject line FALSE STARTS.



Suikoden III Revealed for PS2

So which RPG has got just about everyone on staff excited this month? *Final Fantasy X*, right? Er, no. Believe it or don't, it's *Suikoden III*, the PS2 sequel to the highly rated PS one cult classics from Konami. On schedule for a December release in Japan, *Suikoden III* has finally been unveiled, along with a few tasty screens. Details are currently scarce, but the game will be playable at the Tokyo Game Show in mid-October. Be sure to head over to www.playstationmagazine.com during that time for our hands-on impressions!



Title	The Game	The Pros	The Cons
 The Lost World: Jurassic Park 1997 - PS one	You take on the role of one of several carnivorous dinosaurs in this over-the-top platform adventure.	Gorgeous graphics; you eat your enemies to replenish health.	It breaks every good rule of platform game design with its terrible controls and collision detection.
 Small Soldiers 1998 - PS one	In an odd departure from the film, all the action in this third-person 3D shooter takes place on the planet Gorgon.	Some nice graphics, an entertaining two-player "Frag Mode."	Poor use of the license, boring levels, nasty controls, and some awful framerate issues.
 Small Soldiers: Squad Command 1998 - PC	Get this: It's a real-time strategy game, for kids! The one actually uses the license.	Simple and manageable; this one lets its target audience win.	Sorely lacking in depth for the older or more advanced player.
 Trespasser 1998 - PC	You play a young woman stranded on "Site B," a second island infested with dinosaurs escaped from <i>Jurassic Park</i> .	Boasts an extraordinarily detailed and realistic physics engine.	That physics engine makes even the simplest tasks hair-tearingly tedious.
 Tai-Fu: Wrath of the Tiger 1999 - PS one	As a kung-fu tiger, you choose your way (murder, all environments).	Nice graphics, lots and lots of moves, and some nice 40 levels.	Sloppy controls, bad collision detection, slowdown, poor camera angles.
 Medal of Honor 1999 - PS one	This first-person shooter has players infiltrating Nazi Germany, employing stealth and realistic weaponry.	Extraordinary graphics, phenomenal atmosphere, excellent levels of detail and difficulty.	Weak multiplayer design, with bland levels and restrictive options.
 Medal of Honor: Underground 2000 - PS one	<i>Underground</i> takes the Nazi-busting action to France's biggest, deepest adventure.	Everything good from "Mort" is better, especially the nasty enemy AI.	Multiplayer is still a bit weak, but it's hard to complain when everything else rocks so hard.
 Clive Barker's Undying 2001 - PC	First-person shooter based on the horror of Clive Barker.	Great graphics, exceptional atmosphere, intriguing characters.	Very linear; some odd settings jar players from the horror theme.
 Medal of Honor: Frontline 2002 - PS2	Bigges, better, faster, more... even deeper story elements and cinematics.	The PS one game already took gorgeous; can't wait to see this one.	Will they have enough time to devote to the multiplayer aspect this time around?
 Medal of Honor: Fighter Command 2002 - PS2	Players will pilot WWII planes throughout the Pacific arena following the attack on Pearl Harbor.	Will be more of an action game than a simulation, focusing on the excitement and danger of flight.	Much too early to tell, but it could end up being too simple for <i>Mort</i> fans.

GAME DEVELOPERS*



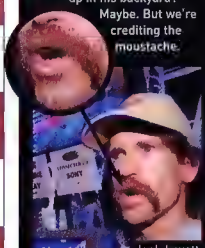
(*WITH MOUSTACHES)

If you haven't heard of Tony Hawk's *Pro Skater*, you just haven't been listening. If you haven't played it, you're missing out on one of the finest experiences since video games were conceived. Joel Jewett is one part of the *Neversoft* triumvirate that can be held fully responsible for Pro Skater's massive success.

Neversoft started way back in 1994, with the development of *Apocalypse*, which featured actor Bruce Willis. Once the *Apocalypse* game engine was tweaked and rewritten, it led to the creation of the Tony Hawk engine (also used for the *Spider-Man* series)—and the company took off.

Now *Neversoft* is considered at the top of its game, and Jewett is a perfect emblem of that success. Is it his humility? The fact that he's just a really cool guy? Is it the six-foot vert ramp set up in his backyard?

Maybe. But we're crediting the moustache.



Games he's worked on: Tony Hawk's *Pro Skater* series (multiple platforms), *Spider-Man* series (multiple platforms), *Apocalypse*

Moustache Rating: 9.5



Armored Core Times 3

Instead of creating yet another upgrade for part 2, From Software is going the extra mile and putting together a completely new Armored Core installment for the PS2. Due out next summer in Japan, the game is said to take inspiration from Konami's Z.O.E.—perhaps making this third outing a bit more enjoyable.



WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO...

THE GETAWAY



Ever see a game that looks really cool but then fades from the spotlight without explanation? A game that will be big news, but then will go months without a single word said about it? Well, we've decided to devote a spot to highlighting games that have fallen off the radar. This month, we turn to Sony Europe and *The Getaway*.

Rarely do games receive as much attention as *The Getaway* did when it was first announced last year. Entirely due to its visuals (we even went so far as to call it "The Coolest-Looking Game Ever!" on our June 2000 cover), *The Getaway* certainly wasn't lacking in the hype department.

But ever since its early showings, updates have pretty much tapered off to nothing. No new shots, no new details. Nothing at all.

So what the heck happened? Well, according to sources inside Sony, the game was a little too ambitious for its own good. Having already cost a staggering \$5 million, *The Getaway* has turned into a massive time and money bleeder. To help offset this, Phil Harrison, senior VP of development for Sony Computer Entertainment Europe, recently merged SCE's Camden Studio (Dropship) with Soho (The Getaway guys), but it looks like it won't help get the game going anywhere anytime soon.

The *Getaway* likely won't be ready until next summer now that's also assuming SCEA doesn't stall on a U.S. release. That's a shame—but here's hoping the extra time will reap extra quality.

Caught in the Exclusives Game

With the console platform wars starting to heat up, *exclusive* is a word you're going to see thrown around by companies more and more often. *Exclusive* this, *exclusive* that—you'll even see *exclusive* sequels on one platform to *exclusive* games on another. It's gonna get confusing, that's for sure. So what's the deal with all these exclusives? What's the point? And what the heck does *exclusive* mean anyway?

ex·clu'sive (ik sklōō sīv)
adj. 1. Not divided or shared with others

Taken in the context of video games, *exclusive* means "limited to one platform." Which, in the video game world, as we all know, is a big deal. Having a big-name title on one specific platform is often reason enough to purchase that system over the others.

Knowing this, the Big Three—Nintendo, Sony and Microsoft—are all trying to land games exclusively on their platforms. As you've probably heard, Sony has secured titles like *Metal Gear Solid 2* and *Virtua Fighter 4* for the PS2, and Microsoft has games like *Dead or Alive 3* and *Dead to Rights* for the Xbox.

So if you want to play *Dead to Rights*, you'll only be able to play it on the Xbox, right? Uh, nope. See, many of the so-called exclusives you'll hear about aren't *exclusive* at all. Take *Dead to Rights*, for example. Despite being called an Xbox *exclusive*, the game is coming to the PS2 just three short months after the Xbox version hits—a little fact that Microsoft probably doesn't want you to know. And *MG52*, despite being a PS2 *exclusive*, will likely land on the Xbox at some point (although it won't be for a long while—at least).

Sony was smart enough to lock it in for a full year!

In fact, almost every "exclusive" game is destined to land on other platforms. These days, companies can't afford to limit their titles to only one system. Developers want, er...need as much cold, hard cash as possible to offset fast-rising development costs. And that's great news for PS2 owners, since the console already has a massive user base.

That's also why most of Xbox's "exclusives" are now headed to Sony territory, including *Malice*, *DOA3* and *Enclave*. The PS2 will also play host to a fine array of "exclusive to Xbox" Sega games like *Jet Grind Radio Future* and *Panzer Dragon*. "We



never used the word 'exclusive.'..." Sega of America president Peter Moore told us. "They're only *premiering* on the Xbox."

The exclusives battle is only going to heat up in the months to come. The next *Resident Evil* looks set to land on Nintendo's GameCube first, and *Dino Crisis 3* will likely grace the Xbox before PS2. But take heart, PS2 fans—we might not get to play every game first, but we will get to play most of them at some point. And that can't be said for the other two platforms, which won't be getting some stellar titles like *Final Fantasy X*, um, ever.

So is there such a thing as an *exclusive*? Well, yes. Some games really, truly are platform-specific, but those mostly come from

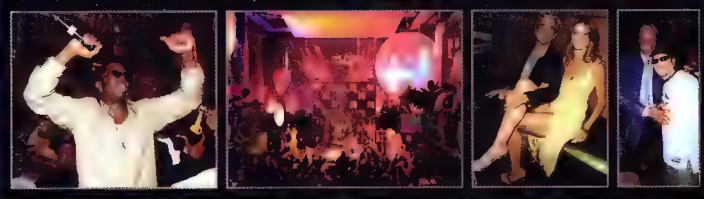
internal-development studios. Just as you'll never find a Mario game on the PS2, you'll never see a *Twisted Metal* on the GameCube. And that's yet another reason to get all smug about being a PlayStation owner. Simply said, no other platform has as many *true* exclusives. Nintendo has Mario, Metroid and *Zelda*. Xbox has, uh...Munch? But we've got, to name just a few, *ICO*, *WipeOut*, *PaRappa*, *Gran Turismo* and *Syphon Filter*, from Sony developers like Naughty Dog and Polyphony Digital. Seems that being a PlayStation fan is the best kind of *exclusive* after all.

**"We never used the word 'exclusive.'
They're only premiering on the Xbox."**

—Peter Moore, president, Sega of America

P. Diddy's PS2 Party

On the night before MTV's Video Music Awards in New York, Sony and P. Diddy teamed up for a massive pre-show bash for all the guests. In attendance were such well-knowns as members of The Backstreet Boys, *NSYNC, Gwen Stefani, Usher, O-Town, Nelly and more.

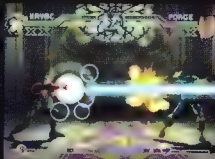


All photos by Wire Image/Kevin Mazur except top right, by Wire Image/Larry Busacca

TAKE FIGHTING TO NEW HEIGHTS



Fight as 10 X-MEN from the original roster and 6 new X-MEN: Rogue, Nightcrawler, Havok, Forge and 2 secret characters.



Perform signature mutant moves—even stunning aerial combat—in 10 of the original arenas, plus 6 new locations.



Go solo or take on a friend as you fight to dominate the arena. Enjoy 4 modes of play: Academy, Training, Arcade and Versus.

X-MEN[®] 2 MUTANT ACADEMY[™]



Violence

ACTIVISION

activision.com

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Clich MacLaver's GOSSIP GOSSIP

Gossip, rumor and scandal. Gaming's biggest secrets dug up and served with gravy.

I come across great rumors all the time thanks to my network of pals and my ability to drink like a fish while speaking to game-industry windbags. But what about you? If you know any gaming gossip, drop me a line and dish the dirt so I can share the wealth. Send your notes to clich_macLaver@ziffdavis.com. I'd love to hear from you.

Doom 3 Cometh

PC gamers have been champing at the bit with excitement over John Carmack's upcoming sequel to *Doom*, which promises fabulous visuals along with gameplay that pushes the first-

Activision, *Doom 3* will be shared with the rest of us. I've no idea when it'll be out, but I'd imagine that by next summer we'll get to see some early preview screens of it. It seems Activision has the market cornered on cool shooters now—especially with *Return to Wolfenstein* on the cards too

I Have A Need. A Need For Speed. On PS2.

We've all been wondering for a while what was going on with the *Need For Speed* franchise. The series was somewhat stifled in its Porsche Unleashed guise,

on what form it will take, but I sincerely hope everyone concerned realizes what a fabulous formula they'd stumbled upon with *High Stakes* and chooses to develop the game in that direction. It seems certain that the game will also return to the more conventional selection of vehicles, rather than sucking up to one particular manufacturer.

Bizarre Back On PS2

Sticking with the driving genre, I learned this month that Bizarre Creations is currently beaver- ing away on a secret project for the PS2. After creating the definitive Formula One game for PlayStation back in the early days of PS one, the team has strayed a little in recent years. MSR on the Dreamcast was OK, but not

release. Expect something that also captures the criminal aspects of the film as well as the hot-rod racing. Prepare yourself for plenty of images of *Vin Diesel* cropping up too.



METAL GEAR SOLID 2 WATCH

SPOILER ALERT! SPOILER ALERT! SPOILER ALERT! DON'T READ THE FOLLOWING IF YOU WANT THE GAME TO BE A SURPRISE!

This is the last MGS2 Watch that we'll be bringing you. Next month we'll have every scrap of info we can find for our cover story, which is set to coincide with the game's release date in November.

Solid Snake is dead; the guy in the game is a genetically engineered clone. • The girl with the railgun who appeared in the second video is called Fortune. She has no combat training, but is a major force on the battlefield. She's called Fortune because she's so lucky in combat—bullets can't hit her, and grenades thrown at her don't explode. She uses up all her luck in battle, though, so in her civilian life she's very unlucky (she loses relatives and loved ones, and really bad things keep happening to her). As you could imagine, she's one pissed-off lady. She also can't aim a gun properly, so that's why she has the biggest, baddest gun in the game. • What the hell is up with Ocelot? Why does he have two hands again? Why is he acting so weird? Apparently the "new" hand belongs to the corpse of Liquid Snake. Whenever Solid Snake comes near Ocelot, Liquid Snake's personality takes over Ocelot through residual DNA somethingorother's from Liquid's old arm. Ocelot spends much of the game fighting the duality, and consequently ends up seeming to be completely barking mad for the majority of the proceedings. • Maybe you know, maybe you don't, but all the game's cutscenes have an active camera, so you

"Liquid Snake's personality takes over Ocelot through residual DNA somethingorother's"

person shooter genre way beyond the usual Quake or Half-Life clones. Why am I telling you this? Because these games are no longer exclusively designed for 3D accelerated PCs with ludicrous setups. Thanks to

and we've not heard a peep out of EA about upcoming games. After asking all kinds of people, I finally found someone who admitted he'd seen the project and that it, predictably, looks "awesome." There's no word yet

wonderful, and Bizarre has since been working on the Xbox version, *Project Gotham*, which is hardly groundbreaking. The PS2 game is rumored to be a completely new franchise, based on it will apparently be based on licensed sports cars, much like MSR.

Fast And Furious New Car Game

Given the unprecedented success of the movie *The Fast and the Furious*, it's surprising that a game tie-in hasn't been announced yet. Both Midnight Club and Tokyo Xtreme Racer Zero managed to benefit nicely from the hype of the movie (TXRZ even had the trailer on the disc), but now, with news of an impending sequel, I've heard rumors from multiple sources that a developer is working on a game that will no doubt end up wearing the moniker of the movie in time for the sequel's



can zoom in and look around and stuff. • As I've reported before, Hideo Kojima has said that this is to be his last Metal Gear game (there may be more, but he won't be involved), and his next project is probably going to be a far less action-oriented game based around some kind of father and son relationship.

BITS AND BOBS

I've mentioned this a few times, but I'm still getting word about *Half-Life 3* even before *Half-Life 2* is out! The second game has been in development for three years already, and will explain why the aliens came to Earth in the first place. In *Half-Life 3*, I'm informed that the hero of the first game returns, but this time he's a bad guy. • Sega and Namco are teaming up for another gun-shooting game. Now that WOW Entertainment has finished *Vampire Night*, the team is working on a game based on the Japanese anime *Lupin*. For those who don't know the series, *Lupin* follows an adventurous thief who travels the world in search of money and fame. • Universal Interactive is working on an Incredible Hulk game, set to coincide with the release of Ang Lee's new movie next year.

SURF LIKE THE PROS

Suit up as World Champion Sunny Garcia or 7 other World-Class Surfers such as Cory Lopez, Shea Lopez, Shane Beschen and more.

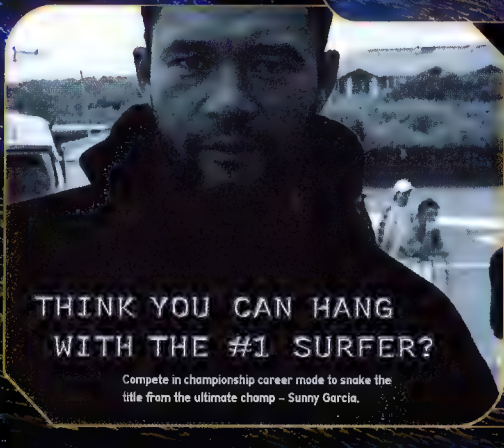
Sunny Garcia Surfing

INSANELY REALISTIC WAVES & MOVES

Harness the power of PlayStation² computer-entertainment system as you surf with exclusive WTS 3.0 Simulation (Wave Technology System) and pull off each surfer's signature moves with sick style through proprietary VMC Technology (Video Motion Capturing).

PADDLE OUT SOLO OR WITH FRIENDS

7 modes of gameplay offer up endless hours of single and multi-player action.



THINK YOU CAN HANG WITH THE #1 SURFER?

Compete in championship career mode to snake the title from the ultimate champ - Sunny Garcia.



RIP IT UP AGAINST THE WORLD CHAMPS!

Northwest Swell... 6 to 8 Foot... Off-Shore Winds... Barreling! It's time to grab your stick and get ready to go off! Sunny Garcia Surfing captures the true essence of surfing as you travel the world in search of the perfect wave. Drop in on a gnarly Fiddlesticks 30-footer or have crazy fun sessions with Sandy Beach's 3 to 4 Foot sets. Packed with ultra-realistic moves, you'll be stoked as you link together all of today's sickest surfing tricks including round-house cutbacks, lippers, floaters, barrel rides and unreal airs.

SO GRAB YOUR 6'7" SQUASH TAIL AND RUSH IT! SUNNY GARCIA SURFING IS THE ULTIMATE SURFER'S DESTINATION.

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BYB

LCPSZ

lost

SPM

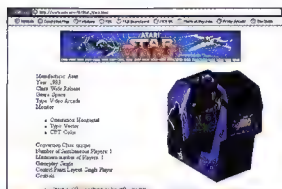
ACRASS

FCS

PlayStation 2

Ubi Soft
www.ubisoft.com

SHANE BESCHEN
ATWALK AIR
AT SANDY BEACH



Bookmarks

www.klov.com

The Killer List of Videogames (sic) boasts a mind-bogglingly huge selection of old-school arcade info, from shots of the cabinets to painstaking details about the technology, gameplay and associated titles. Rock!

www.liquid.se/pang.html

It's 3D Pong. Sounds simple, right? Go try it, tough guy. Just don't come whimpering to us when you can't beat the computer.

www.casketfurniture.com

In addition to building affordable caskets, these folks make furniture that can be used as a final resting place once your time is up. Are they legit? Who can tell?

www.goldengatetunnel.com

Fun for San Franciscans and well, anyone. Hint: Read the *entire* site, especially the FAQ.

www.smallball.com

Create and manage your own baseball team on the Web. For Windows only, sadly.

www.goodfellasweb.com

Click over to the Information link and then to Lingo. Within you'll discover a definition for every gangster term we've ever heard. Fun for reconstructing your Family vernacular.

www.scaa.com/underground

It's the PlayStation Underground, now coming to you bimonthly (and soon, monthly!) with your dose of OPM. Drop 'em a line to let 'em know you care.

www.findagrave.com

To continue with the morbid theme established with casket-furniture.com—find out where famous dead folks are right now.

www.upromise.com

We need to preface this by saying this is not any kind of endorsement. We just found this site that lets you save for a child's college education (or your own) through "points" programs with retailers and credit-card companies. It sounds almost too good to be true, but check it out yourself.

AMANO DOES MARVEL



They're described as "the world's sexiest superheroes." While that may be up for debate, it's certainly true that there's something special about both Wolverine and Elektra. So it's no surprise that Marvel decided to develop an "illustrated prose project" centered around the two. What might be surprising for some is that Yoshitaka Amano, longtime artist for the Final Fantasy series, has signed on to do the art for *Elektra & Wolverine: The Redeemer*, developing full-page illustrations to run opposite prose text by critically acclaimed novelist and comic author Greg Rucka. (Fans of Neil Gaiman's *Sandman* comic may be aware that Amano also illustrated that series' most recent graphic novel, *The Dream Hunters*.) The story will pit the two heroes against each other when Elektra is hired to assassinate a powerful scientist. Before she can flee the scene, the scientist's daughter appears, and Elektra resolves to do away with the only witness. There's just one problem: Wolverine has been hired to protect her. Check out this cover art above for a small taste of the action, and check your local comic shop for more.

Sound Station

By John Scalzi

Hey kids! You ready to kick it old school? We've got some searing slabs of punk and metal from the days of Rubik's Cubes and Members Only jackets—all featured on the THP53 soundtrack.



Adolescents: *Adolescents*

Frontier Records

Featured In: Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

Adolescents' debut album is a collection of punk rock songs that are as fast and furious as the band's live shows. The album features a mix of original songs and covers, including "I Wanna Be a Star" and "I Wanna Be a Star (Reprise)." The album is a great introduction to the band's sound.



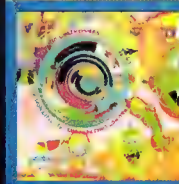
Motorhead: *Ace of Spades*

Capitol Records

Featured In: Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

Galloping skank metal at its finest—this is the album that put Motorhead on the map and set down the blueprint that other bands like Metallica rode to glory. Trundling through Western-inspired metal tracks like "Ace of Spades" and "Shoot You in the Back" is like putting your head on the train tracks and waiting for the Super Chief to come chugging down the line, and "We Are! The Road Crew" is metal's best paean to roadies.

Final Score: ★★★★★



The Bad Religion: *The Union*

Capitol Records

Featured In: Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

Bad Religion's new album is a collection of punk rock songs that are as fast and furious as the band's live shows. The album features a mix of original songs and covers, including "I Wanna Be a Star" and "I Wanna Be a Star (Reprise)." The album is a great introduction to the band's sound.



Redman: *Malpractice*

Def Jam Records

Featured In: Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

Malpractice lives up to its title: While it has some anthropological value as a prime example of the sort of rap album that makes middle-aged white Republicans quiver in their expensive socks, what with all "N" words and "MF" words and blunt smoking and whatnot, as music it's pretty stupid and pointless. The album also features comedy "skits" that you might find amusing if either your age or IQ is hovering near 12.

Final Score: ★



Rollins Band: *New*

BMG Records

Featured In: Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3

Rollins Band's new album is a collection of punk rock songs that are as fast and furious as the band's live shows. The album features a mix of original songs and covers, including "I Wanna Be a Star" and "I Wanna Be a Star (Reprise)." The album is a great introduction to the band's sound.

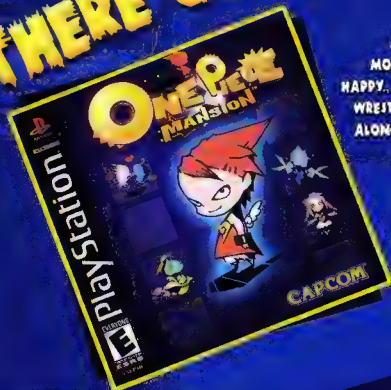
John Scalzi has a new, hilarious, and often outrageous book called *How to Write a Novel That Will Sell*. It's available at www.scalzi.com or by e-mail to scalzi@scalzi.com. You can also find it at www.scalzi.com.



ONE PIECE MANSION

THERE GOES THE NEIGHBORHOOD!

IT'S NOT EASY BEING THE LANDLORD OF THE ONE PIECE MANSION. IN THIS WACKY PUZZLE GAME IT'S YOUR JOB TO MAKE SURE LIFE RUNS SMOOTHLY. BUILD UP YOUR MANSION AS HIGH AS YOU CAN, RAISE THE RENT AND COLLECT MORE MONEY. BUT, IT'S ALSO UP TO YOU TO KEEP EVERYBODY HAPPY, HAPPY... OR ELSE THEY'LL MOVE AND SKID OUT ON THEIR RENT. CAN A SUMO WRESTLER, NEWLYWED COUPLE, CAT LADY, STUDENT AND MORE REALLY GET ALONG? IT'S GOING TO TAKE SOME SERIOUS SKILL TO KEEP THE PEACE AND MAKE SURE LIFE AT THE ONE PIECE MANSION REMAINS STRESS FREE!



♥ Keep the Peace Among Your Tenants in Order to Make More Money and Add to Your Mansion



♥ Wacky Gameplay that Will Leave You Frantic!



♥ A Puzzle Game Full of Crazy Tenants!



COMIC MISCHIEF



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SPIN

DVD News

1.21 GIGAWATTS

In a recent interview with *IGN.com*, *Back to the Future* producer Bob Gale confided that we may see DVD versions of the beloved trilogy as early as next year. Apparently Universal is waiting for a foreign DVD publishing-rights deal to expire before releasing their highest-profile products. Gale said he believes the deal expires at the end of this year, and expressed fervent interest in releasing special editions, though he was quick to point out that "there's no set plan yet, or budget."

LEST WE FORGET

With this past year's war-film glut, it's no surprise that Fox is planning to release nine of their own films on DVD under the heading of Fox War Classics. These will include rereleases of *The Longest Day*, *Patton*, *The Thin Red Line*, *Twelve O'Clock High*, and *Van Ryan's Express*. Also included will be the first-ever DVD releases of *Guadalcanal Diary*, *The Halls of Montezuma*, *A Wing and A Prayer*, and *The Young Lions*. The entire line will release on Nov. 6 with an MSRP of \$19.95 each.



SQUEAKY WHEELS GET THE GREASE

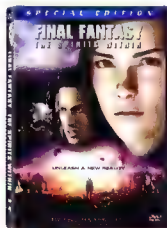
We're not sure if it was the online petition we talked about last month that got this going, but Warner Home Video recently announced that they will in fact be releasing a widescreen version of *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* 30th Anniversary Special Edition. From what we can tell, everything except the aspect ratio is the same as the originally announced version. It's hit retail on Nov. 13 for \$24.98.

I KNOW KUNG FU

Now that *Matrix Reloaded*, the sequel to *The Matrix*, has been delayed until 2003, we're just going to have to keep rewatching our Special Edition DVDs to get our *Matrix* fix. Or are we? Warner Home Video has announced that they will be releasing *The Matrix Revisited* on Nov. 20 for \$19.95. Contrary to the impression the name (and the price!) might give, this is *not* a re-release of the film. Instead, it's an extensive collection of supplemental material. The package is slated to include, among other things, a behind-the-scenes featurette on *Matrix Reloaded*, interviews with *Matrix* fans, a light choreography featurette with Wu Ping, a music montage with never-before-seen footage—plus, a sneak peek at the new *Matrix* on site exclusively for DVD-ROM users. Head over to u2info.com and check the news posting for 8/22/03 for a link to a trailer.

DVD Reviews

by John Scalzi



STARRING:
Ming Na, James Woods

FINAL FANTASY: THE SPIRITS WITHIN: SE

The graphics: Amazingly great, the sort of eye-popping stuff you just want to stare at over and over. Aki: The first entirely computer-generated woman you don't feel too freakishly geek-like to admit you find hot. Story: Weird sci-fi earth-hugging barf. But what a view. The DVD is a bundle of fun, too—features spanning two discs include commentary from the director, key artists and the composer, an interactive documentary, alternate scenes and miniseries, the ability to edit a scene from the film, and tons of production, character and design info. Worth getting for the DVD toys alone, and for the staring. Remember to blink.

Movie Score ●●● DVD Extras Score ●●●●●

BEASTMASTER: SE (Eric Singer, Tanya Roberts)

This would be the film that would have got my vote for "80s Flick Least Likely to Require a Special-Edition DVD," but I guess that's why I'm not a VP of marketing somewhere in Hollywood. Marc Singer, king of '80s B-movies, runs around with a sword and a spray-painted tiger to avenge the destruction of his village or something like that. You probably saw this on TNT when you

were 10 and had no critical discrimination to alert you it was crap [this is my personal excuse for enjoying it]. Features director commentary, which, all things considered, should be a hoot.

Movie Score ●●
DVD Extras Score ●●

BRIDGET JONES'S DIARY: SE (Renée Zellweger, Hugh Grant)

Renée Zellweger puts on 20 pounds

and a British accent to play a 30-ish woman trying to figure out her life. No, no, don't run away, it's actually pretty good, not in the least bit thanks to co-screenwriter Richard Curtis, one of the more dependably witty writers in movies today (he did *Four Weddings and a Funeral*). Besides, Zellweger is delightful, and Hugh Grant is, too (he gets to play a cad for once). It's a "date DVD" if there ever was one. DVD extras are fair enough. There's director com-

mentary, a couple of music videos and a movie trailer.

Movie Score ●●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●●

CATS & DOGS: SE

(Jeff Goldblum, Sean Hayes)

OK, here's my problem with this flick: If cats and dogs really were super-intelligent, do you think they'd really be fighting each other—or going after the people who removed their sexual organs? Yeah, that's what I think, too. That objection aside, it's a cute film, and what's not to like about ninja cats and secret-agent dogs? DVD extras are light but feature one nice touch: two audio commentaries...one from the cats, and one from the dogs. Cute, right?

Movie Score ●●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●●

DOCTOR DOOLITTLE 2: SE

(Eddie Murphy, Lisa Kudrow)

I can't imagine that when he was the biggest star on the planet in the '80s, Eddie Murphy would have expected he'd be spending this part of his life genially remaking cheesy '60s comedies—and then making sequels to those remakes. But better this than *Harlem Nights 2*. This time around, Murphy tries to get two kvetching bears to mate to save some woodlands. Yes, Eddie Murphy, sex counselor to the ursine world! Great career move, Eddie! DVD Extras aren't bad: director commentary, a couple of bear documentaries, extended scenes and music videos.

Movie Score ●●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●●●

FREDDY GOT FINGERED: SE

(Tom Green, Rip Torn)

Many people believe that this is perhaps the worst film ever released by a major movie studio. I think that may

be too limiting. This is perhaps the worst film ever released by a choreographer. Tom Green, who is one of those people who makes you hope for a fortuitous combination of a banana peel and a wood chipper, flounders around performing allegedly amusing tricks like licking scabs, swinging newborns from the umbilicus, and splashing co-stars with elephant poo. The DVD comes with a laugh track. It doesn't help. Also director commentary, deleted scenes and a "PG version" which is three minutes long.

Movie Score NO DISCS
DVD Extras Score ●●●●

MONTY PYTHON AND THE HOLY GRAIL: SE

(John Cleese, Michael Palin)

You're banging two coconuts together! What is the air-speed velocity of an unladen swallow? And the number of the counting shall be three! I'm not dead yet! Help, I'm being repressed! And there was much rejoicing! If you followed any of the above, I don't know why you're not lining up outside the DVD store right now to get this one. Amusing DVD extras include audio tracks by the Pythones, "How to Use Your Coconuts" educational film, sing-alongs and 24 seconds of previously unseen footage!

Movie Score ●●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●●●

THE MUMMY RETURNS: SE

(Brendan Fraser, The Rock)

Get ready for more utterly nonsensical fake Egyptology involving evil mummies, armies of the undead, and professional wrestler The Rock running around with a computer-generated lobster tail coming out of his ass. But what the heck, it's fun anyway, and I'm continually amazed at how much I'm amused by Brendan Fraser. It's something latent, I'm sure. DVD extras include outtakes, music videos,

"Egyptology 101" and an interview with The Rock. He's great with lemon butter!

Movie Score ●●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●●

SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS: SE

Disney's marketers are prone to calling every animated feature of theirs a "masterpiece," even the unmitigated crap like *The Fox and the Hound*, but in this case it's absolutely true. *Snow White* is the very first full-length animated film, and while it plays a little slow today, in 1937 it was a lightning bolt. Serious animation buffs should buy this for the DVD extras, spread across two discs, which include commentary from Walt himself (recorded before he died, duh) and scads of historical stuff like abandoned storylines, deleted songs, related animated shorts, features on the technological and artistic challenges of creating the films, and so on. A must-have for animation fans.

Movie Score ●●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●●●

THE TERMINATOR: SE

(Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton)

The movie that made Ah-nold a star (*Conan the Barbarian* just proved he looked buff in a loincloth) and gave James Cameron a career. The movie is, I think, slightly overrated, but it does show how much action Cameron was able to eke out of a clearly limited budget. And Arnold, of course, is excellent as a humorless monotone android. Good DVD features: commentary by Cameron, deleted scenes (also with commentary), script-to-screen comparisons, storyboards and a retrospective on the film.

Movie Score ●●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●●●



Maul Rats Rejoice

Let's deal with the main complaint about *Star Wars: Episode I—The Phantom Menace* and no, it's not about Jar Jar. It's the fact that after nearly two decades, George Lucas finally gave us a new *Star Wars* film—and it wasn't all that good. This is true, but the real question is: Is it really any worse than the originals? Check out the acting in *Star Wars*, or the Ewokiness of *Jedi* and you'll realize that the *Star Wars* label is not your assurance of (forgive the pun) stellar filmmaking. Yes, *Empire* is actually a good film. But it's so depressing, I say, enjoy *Star Wars* films for what they are: eye candy! With effeminate robots!

Lucas' excuse for not putting *Episode I* on DVD earlier is related to the eye-candy theory: He wanted to add some really nice visual goodies for the fans. To his credit, this DVD package delivers. There's the film,



Star Wars: Episode I—
The Phantom Menace
Street Date: 10/26/2001
MPAA: PG-13

and Lucas and the principals of his creative staff (Rick McCallum, Ben Burtt, Rob Coleman, John Knoll, Dennis Muren and Scott Squires) provide commentary, which will no doubt be like gold to the fans. But the big draw is that the Lucasfilm crew went back and fleshed out seven deleted scenes for the DVD release, adding special effects and what-not to bring them up to release quality.

On top of this there's a documentary following the creative crew during the initial production, augmented with a "made-for-the-Web" documentary that originally aired in segments on the Lucasfilm Web site; five features on storyline, design, costumes, visual effects and fight sequences; tons of production art, marketing posters and art; trailers, TV spots and even a documentary on making the PS2 game *Star Wars: Starfighter*. We're talking eight hours of stuff, total. Just about the only thing that's missing is the bootleg "Episode 1.1," (perhaps better known as "The Phantom Edit" which a fan created to make Jar Jar less hateful to everyone over the age of eight. A shame, that.

DVD Releases



Clockwise: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Freddy Got Fingered*, *Cats and Dogs*, *Doctor Doolittle 2*, *The Mummy Returns*



GOOD

~~VS.~~ Or

EVIL

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Violence

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RETURNS

www.mummyreturnsgame.com



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Everyone



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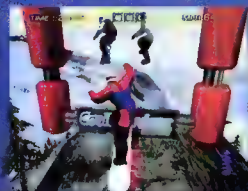
**Cool Boarders®
2001**



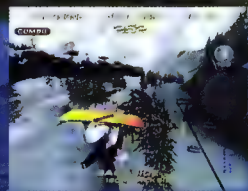
Jeremy Jones casually tweaks a switch 1440 shaleysh over a 70-foot+ cliff bang.



Amateur rider Trent dove's huge distance with this late 180 tail grab in Canada.



Blinding speeds and endless combinations are Tara Dakides' key to boardercross.



Todd Richards gets big style points with this inverted backside 180 in the Highland Half-Pipe.



Kevin Jones grabbing shaleysh over powder transitions.

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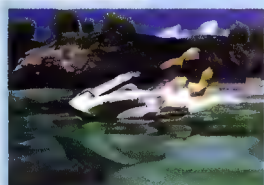
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HOLLYWOOD BANTER



Tony Hawk's Pro Movie Career

Tony Hawk is to star in an untitled comedy written by Ralph Sall (music producer on *Three Kings*, *The Replacement Killers* and *The New Guy*). The closely guarded plot will center on a road trip and will, predictably, highlight Hawk's skateboarding prowess. Did you expect anything less? Hawk has previously appeared in the films *Gleaming The Cube*, *Thrashin'* and *Police Academy 4: Citizens on Patrol*, and shows up as himself in *The New Guy* and *Big Move*. He's also been in a couple of moderately successful video games, and has another one on the way.

Tomb Raider 2: The Good One

If the fortunes of the movie world mimic those of the video game world, then we may just be in for a treat with the next *Tomb Raider*, given that the second game was the "good one." While talking to the U.K.'s *Daily Record*, Angelina Jolie gave the word on the sequel, saying, "It looks like it's going to happen. They are writing another one. I am going to be Lara Croft again. If we can make it a hundred times better, if we can do a whole bunch of new things, think of a whole new sequence, get a great script with everything that nobody has ever seen before, then we will do it." If it needs to be a hundred times better, does that mean she didn't like the first one?

The Ninth X-Files

X-Files producer Frank Spotnitz spoke to Zap2it last month about the upcoming season of the *X-Files*. "We have full-time Gillian," he began. "It's really a three-lead show, because you've got her and Robert [Patrick] and Annabeth [Gish]. That's what's making it so challenging for us this year, because we've never had to do that before. We had to do it some what when Mulder returned, but this is different."

Regarding the focus of the ninth season, Spotnitz says, "There are a lot of questions about the baby. OK, like, she and Mulder had sex, but she still was barren...so how did that happen?" Hah! At last! Someone says it out loud. So Mulder and Scully did have sex? "Eh, that's another question. What is the mystery of the baby? Why did the aliens hunt it down and then leave it? Can Scully be at peace with this question? I think that's the biggest issue. Then there's a bunch of new issues that spring up around that."

He continues, "Also, the Doggett-and-Reyes-versus-

the-FBI, and is it safe to work at the FBI, given the fact that there seem to be aliens walking around the corridors? There were a lot of immediate things we knew we had to attend to, our first day back at work." Quite.

www.zap2it.com

Jurassic Park Zero

It seems that the makers of the *Jurassic Park* series may well be taking a cue from video game designers as their franchise begins to spawn sequel after sequel. As we've seen with so many games, the magic treatment seems to be "If it's getting long in the tooth, make the next one a prequel." Early reports that have allegedly leaked from Industrial Light & Magic indicate that one of two possible scenarios will be the focus of the film. Either: a) It will reveal what happened to the stolen canister in the original flick, or b) It will highlight the genetic problems encountered as the scientists on Isla Nublar attempted to isolate the original dino-DNA. Either one sounds eminently possible, but should they really bother?

Monthly Vin Diesel News

Popular muscle boy Vin Diesel is said to have a lot on his plate these days, with a number of projects lining up ahead of him. The big news, of course, concerns the rumors that he will get to square off against Arnie in the new *Terminator*. Of this he says, "I haven't seen the script yet"—so that's neither a yes nor a no. Search around on the Net, though, and it's treated as if it's a foregone conclusion.

Of his role in *Hellboy*, Diesel seems enthusiastic. He told U.K.-based movie mag *Empire*, "I like *Hellboy* for the same reason I liked *The Iron Giant*. This guy's just ambivalent about his strength. He's like this cool guy who doesn't understand his strength, and he goes through life like a bull in a china shop. I love it."

Diesel will also be reprising his role as Richard B. Riddick in the sequel to the surprise hit *Pitch Black*. The new movie, titled *The Chronicles of Riddick*, is scheduled for release next year.

www.empiremagazine.co.uk

No More Apes, Ever

Tim Burton has said he's not interested in doing a sequel to *Planet of the Apes*. Burton told *Reuters*, "The idea of doing a sequel—I'd rather jump out of the window, I swear to God. They give you a script, and you do a budget based on that, and say, 'This movie would cost \$300 million to make,' and then they treat you like a crazy, overspending, crazy person. It's like, 'Well, you gave me the script.' I'm fascinated by the studio technique that sort of leaves you bloodied, beaten and left for dead right before you're supposed to go out and make a great movie for them."

www.reuters.com

Gladiator Sequel? Why?

Gladiator producer Doug Wick has confirmed that he and the other producers of the movie are in talks to make a sequel and are keen to see Russell Crowe starring once again. This raises the following questions: Why? Why? And, um, Why?



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TOP 10 CHARTS

PS2 Top 10

Another stellar month with only one real black eye. But it very much pleases us that the fantastic NCAA Football has jumped all the way to No. 2. Now we're eager to see the slugfest between GT3 and Madden 2002. Drivers, start your engines. Ready, set, hike!

Last Month	Title / Publisher	Rating
1	Gran Turismo 3: A-spec Sony CEA	★★★★

A return to the top spot by GT3? The Vegas oddsmakers knew this was a sure bet. Plenty of great titles are blotting store shelves, but nothing inspires people to fork out \$50 like GT3. This is the type of grand game that convinces you to call in sick to work, put an extra pillow on the couch, and play an entire day away. Our advice: Don't buy it on a Friday. Your whole weekend will be shot.



2	NCAA Football 2002 EA Sports	★★★★
3	NBA Street EA Big	★★★★
4	Mobile Suit Gundam: Jaburo Bandai	●
5	Twisted Metal: Black Sony CEA	★★★★
6	Extermination Sony CEA	★★
7	MX 2002 f/ Ricky Carmichael THQ	★★★★
8	Rune: Viking Warlord Take 2 Interactive	★★
9	Red Faction THQ	★★★★
10	Tekken Tag Tournament Namco	★★★★

OPM's Most Wanted PS2 Games

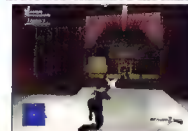


- Grand Theft Auto III Rockstar
- Metal Gear Solid 2 Konami
- Tony Hawk 3 Activision
- Okage: Shadow King Sony CEA
- SSX: Tricky EA Big
- Final Fantasy X Square EA
- Jak and Daxter Sony CEA
- Baldur's Gate Interplay
- Maximo Capcom
- NFL 2K2 Sega

Japan's Top 10 PS2 and PS one Games

- Hot Shots Golf 3 (2) Sony CEJ
- From TV Ani.: TK (1) Bandai
- Final Fantasy X (2) Square
- Summon Night 2 (1) Bangresto
- Jikkyo Baseball 2001 (1) Konami
- Gran Turismo 3 (2) Sony CEJ
- Everblue (2) Capcom
- Real Robot Regiment (2) Bangresto
- Hot Shots Golf 2 (1) Sony CEJ
- Ka (Mesquite) (2) Sony CEJ

OPM's Most Wanted PS one Games



- Syphon Filter 3 Sony CEA
- Hoshigami Atlus
- Tony Hawk 3 Activision
- Mega Man X6 Capcom
- Dragon Warrior VII Enix
- T. Metal: Small Brawl Sony CEA
- Harry Potter EA Games
- NHL FaceOff 2002 989 Sports
- SpongeBob THQ
- V.I.P. Ubi Soft

Top 10 Selling Games, All Systems


- Pokémon: Crystal (GBA) Nintendo
- Gran Turismo 3 (PS2) Sony CEA
- NCAA 2002 (PS2) EA Sports
- Super Mario Adv. (GBA) Nintendo
- WS Baseball 2K2 (DC) Sega
- NBA Street (PS2) EA Big
- FF Tactics (PS1) Sony CEA
- Gran Turismo 2 (PS1) Sony CEA
- Sonic Adventure 2 (DC) Sega
- Gundam: Jaburo (PS2) Bandai

PS one Top 10

The constantly fluctuating PS one chart has thrown us yet another curveball. This month seven newcomers enter the list, and all but Madden were released eons ago. Should we expect the rousing arrival of Board Game: Top Shop next month? We hope so.

Last Month	Title / Publisher	Rating
1	Final Fantasy Tactics Sony CEA	★★★★

Memo to all you meanie eBay folks: Now you can no longer sell your scuffed-up, manual-less copies of Final Fantasy Tactics for outrageous markups. Sony has finally rereleased Square's classic strategy/RPG to the delight of so many who missed out the first time around. And it's only \$20! That averages out to, oh, about a shiny quarter for every hour of gameplay. Not a bad deal.



2	Gran Turismo 2 Sony CEA	★★★★
3	Spyro: Year of the Dragon Sony CEA	★★★★
4	Final Fantasy Chronicles Square EA	★★★★
5	Madden NFL 2002 EA Sports	★★★★
6	Crash Bash Sony CEA	★★
7	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 Activision	★★★★
8	Tekken 3 Namco	★★★★
9	Syphon Filter 2 989 Studios	★★★★
10	MLB 2002 989 Studios	★★

Source: NPD TRIST Video Games Service, mid-August 2001. Call them at 855-622-2481 for questions about this list. No games for competing console systems (e.g., N64, Dreamcast) were included. Overall sales figures may vary. Game descriptions written by the OPM staff.

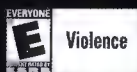
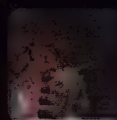
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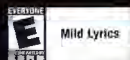
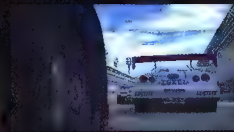
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TAHITI LOOKS A LOT DIFFERENT AT 225 MPH.

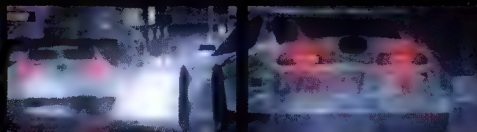


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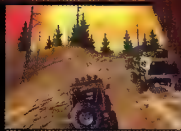


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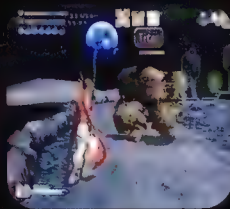


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Coming Soon

October

38 Wheeler	Acclaim	Racing	Frogger: The Great Quest	Konami	Action
Ace Combat 04	Namco	Action	H2O: Drive	Crave	Racing
Batman: Vengeance	Ubi Soft	Action	Hidden Invasion	Conspiracy	Action
Devil May Cry	Capcom	Adv.	James Bond 007 in...AUF	EA Games	FPS
Dragon Rage	3DO	Action	Jeremy McGrath's SuperX	Acclaim	Racing
Driven	Island	Racing	Jurassic Park: Survival	Universal	Action
ESPN NFL PrimeTime	Konami	Sports	Legends of Wrestling	Acclaim	Wrestling
Giants: Citizen Kabuto	Interplay	Adv.	Metal Gear Solid 2: S&L	Konami	Adv.
Gitaroo Man	Koei	Rhythm	NBA 2K2	Sega	Sports
Godar: Elemental Force	3DO	Action	NBA Live 2002	EA Sports	Sports
Grand Theft Auto III	Rockstar	Action	NBA ShootOut 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
Guilty Gear X	Sammy	Fighting	NCAA Final Four 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
Half-Life	Sierra	RPG	NCAA GameBreaker 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
Harvest Moon: Save/Homeland	NiMsame	RPG	NFL Blitz 2002	Midway	Sports
Herby Gerby	Eidos	Action	NFL GameDay 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
Jimmy White's Cue Ball 3	Titus	Sports	NHL FaceOff 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
Kinetica	Sony CEA	Racing	Pirates of Skull Cove	EA Games	Action
The Legend of Alon Dar	Ubi Soft	RPG	Poace 911	Konami	Shooter
Mingof! Maniacs	Sierra	Sports	Rubu Tribe	Interplay	Action
MS Gundam: Zeon c Front	Bandai	Strategy	Salt Lake 2002	Eidos	Sports
The Mummy Returns	Universal	Action	Shaun Palmer Snowboarder	Activision	X-Sports
MXRider	Infogrames	Racing	The Simpsons: Road Rage	EA Games	Action
NFL 2K2	Sega	Sports	SOCOM: U.S. Navy SEALs	Sony CEA	Action
No One Lives Forever	Sierra	FPS	Splashdown	Infogrames	Racing
Okage: Shadow King	Sony CEA	RPG	SSX Tricky	EA Sports	X-Sports
Shadow Man: Second Corn	Acclaim	Adv.	Star Trek Voyager: EF	Majesco	FPS
Smuggler's Run 2	Rockstar	Action	Star Trek: Shattered Universe	Interplay	Action
Sunny Garcia Surfing	Ubi Soft	X-Sports	Tennis Worlds	THQ	Puzzle
Supercar Street Challenge	Activision	Racing	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	Activision	X-Sports
Tarzan Untamed	Ubi Soft	Action	Tsunagi	Allius	RPG
Time Crisis II	Namco	Shooter	Vampire Night	Namco	Shooter
Top Gun: Combat Zone	Titus	Fight Sim	Wave Rally	Eidos	Racing
Victorious Boons	Empire	Sports	Wizardry: Forsaken Land	Allius	RPG
WWF SmackDown! Just...	THQ	Wrestling			

November

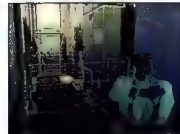
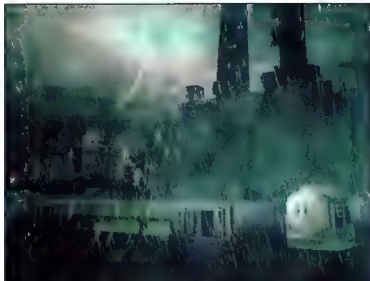
Adventure: P-nall	EA Games	Pinball	Akira Psychoball	AIA	Pinball
Baldur's Gate: DA	Interplay	RPG	Conflict Zone	Ubi Soft	Strategy
Blood Omen 2	Eidos	Adv.	Dynasty Warriors 3	Koei	Action
Capcom vs. SNK 2	Capcom	Fighting	Jade Cocoon 2	Ubi Soft	RPG
Crash Bandicoot: T.WoC	TBA	Action	Jak and Daxter: TPL	Sony CEA	Action
Dark Summit	THQ	X-Sports	Jonny Moseley: Mad Trick	3DO	X-Sports
Deus Ex	Eidos	FPS/RPG	Rayman Arena	Ubi Soft	Action
Downforce	Titus	Racing	Virtual Fighter 4	Sega	Fighting
Dragon: The Ancients' Gate	Sony CEA	Adv.	Wipeout Fusion	TBA	Racing
ESPN Nat'l Hockey Night	Konami	Sports	World Rally Champ 2001	Empire	Racing
ESPN NBA 2Night 2002	Konami	Sports	World Sports Cars	Sony CEA	Racing
ESPN Winter Sports 2002	Konami	Sports	WTC 2001	Sony CEA	Racing
Evi Twin	Ubi Soft	Adv.			
FIFA 2002	EA Sports	Sports			
Frequency	Sony CEA	Puzzle			

Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty

Take a five-day weekend without getting in trouble

Preorder your copy of Metal Gear Solid 2 right now. Grab your diary and make a note of the **Nov. 14** release date (ignore stores that say it's out earlier—they're wrong). It's a Wednesday, slap-bang in the middle of the week—a day that is notoriously difficult to get off work or school without raising suspicion. Mondays and Fridays are easy, although if you take either of them as a "sickie," people tend to just guess that you're extending your weekend. To really be convincing you're going to have to take the Thursday and Friday off as well. Simply taking one day off mid-week makes people think you're going to a job interview. You'll need the additional time, as **Konami** tells us that the game is considerably longer than the first.

You'll need a really convincing excuse, so here's a sure-fire strategy in three easy steps: 1) On Tuesday (Nov. 13), buy a sandwich with hot peppers on it for lunch. Rub 'em on your fingers and then shove your fingers in your nose (not the chilies). Your nose will run uncontrollably all afternoon (it'll sting, too). Complain of other ailments, thus setting you up for the next day off. 2) On Wednesday morning, hang your head upside-down off the edge of the bed while calling your boss. This will cause all the blood and mucus to rush to your head and your throat to contract. You'll be light-headed and sound congested. 3) On Thursday, ask an acquaintance to call in on your behalf as your parent or partner, preferably at an early hour of the morning. They should leave a message that you've been so "ill" all night that you've only just gotten to sleep and shouldn't be woken. Indeed, this won't be stretching the truth much, as you'll probably have been playing the game until the wee hours anyway. By Friday, you won't even need to worry about calling. Voilà! A five-day weekend for MGS2!



Preorder Watch

STORE	PRE-ORDER	PRICE	SHIP DATE
BestBuy.com	Y	\$49.99	11/04/01
Buy.com	Y	\$47.99	11/04/01
EBGames.com	Y	\$49.99	11/13/01
GameStop.com	Y	\$49.99	11/01/01
Microplay.com	Y	\$49.99	11/13/01

all data as of 9/4/01

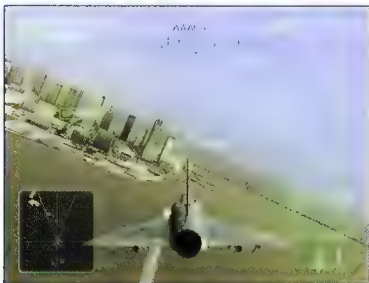
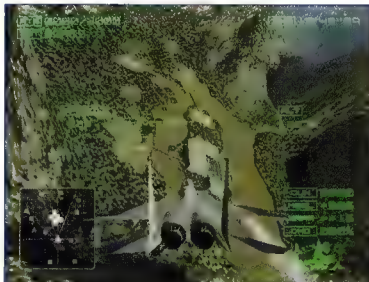
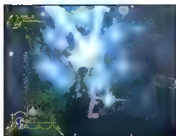
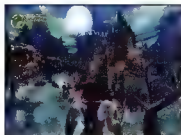
Maximo

Next-generation Ghosts 'N Goblins

It's no secret that most of the best-playing video games come from Japan. For the most part, Japanese-bred games simply possess better character interaction and depth. But there are rare cases where American-developed titles can provide that same level of interaction. Take *Maximo*. Coming from the California-based **Capcom Digital Studios**, *Maximo* will no doubt surprise anyone who picks it up. The game just feels great. And with such industry veterans as David Siller (*Crash Bandicoot*) working on it, we can see why. He and his team have modeled *Maximo* after the great-playing Capcom games of yore, and have managed to come up with something truly special.

Not only does the gameplay of *Maximo* already rock, but everything else seems to be coming together just as well. The topnotch graphics feature a very unique camera that makes everything look spooky and cool. And Tommy Tallarico's soundtrack fits perfectly, as well. The entire presentation of *Maximo* is easily in the same class as a *Devil May Cry* or a *Metal Gear Solid 2*, which again is why we're so pleasantly surprised.

Having recently spent some time with the game, we've also discovered its considerable depth—lots of weapons to acquire, lots of secrets to unravel, and plenty of monsters to deal with. *Maximo* will surely keep you busy this **February**.



Ace Combat 04: Shattered Skies

Though for the first time an *Ace Combat* game will have some direct competition (in the form of *Top Gun*), it looks like **Namco** is more than up to the challenge with *Ace 04*, due for release in **October**. Don't expect many significant alterations from the earlier editions, however; most of the changes take place in graphics, sound, presentation and specific missions. One great addition: You now hear lots and lots of radio chatter, making the whole experience more real.



Harvest Moon: Save the Homeland

We spent a few months tilling the soil and chatting with our rural neighbors—and after scrubbing the dirt from under our fingernails, we're back to report that **Natsume** has provided us with a nice upgrade to its unique farming/RPG hybrid. The cel-shaded graphics lend a new charm to this laid-back life simulator, and the gameplay has been streamlined a bit, making it easier to manage your day-to-day activities. Look forward to a bountiful harvest this **October**.



Tiny Toons: ACME Invasions

Before you pass this off as just another cutesy cartoon-based game, keep this in mind: Tiny Toons is being created by acclaimed Japanese developer **Treasure**—and it rocks! We're serious. Treasure has put the Tiny Toons characters into an extremely addictive four-player party game filled with lots of objectives and fun things to do. **Conspiracy Entertainment** releases Tiny Toons in the U.S. next spring, so we'll be back with plenty more details soon.



Akira Psychoball

It seemed only a matter of time before anime's most influential film got its own game. But pinball? Nothing against Psychoball—we're sure **AiA** is capable of creating some fun video pinball—but is this what all the anime-niacs who've waited years for an Akira video game have always hoped for? Whatever the case, the interchanging tables engaged when the ball leads down certain paths, as well the ability to trigger movie clips, should hold our interest this **December**.

SSX Tricky

More tricks for your buck

In prior previews of **EA Big's** sequel to SSX, we told you that Tricky will be cool because, among other things, it's the follow-up to our favorite PS2 game last year, and it features celebrity voices like Oliver Platt and Lucy Liu. But, at the same time, we've also been leery of the game because the courses within are merely massaged and manipulated versions of those seen in the original SSX. We'd heard that Mother Nature had thrown a few avalanches on them, but it sounded like we'd be racing those same tracks over again.

How wrong we were. Now that we've finally had a chance to play Tricky, we're counting down the days until its **November** release. The feeling of speed and chase returns with a vengeance. The tricks are ramped up big-time, and the characters talk trash while cruising at breakneck speeds. And the tracks? Hardly recognizable.



Tricky Meter

To pull off Tricky's boldest tricks—the Uber Tricks—you must fill your adrenaline meter by performing lesser ones, followed by a button combination. So, while you're focusing on putting off big tricks, you'll have to forget all about the race aspect, since you won't want to waste the adrenaline. After landing six Uber Tricks—one for each letter of "TRICKY"—you can pull off the Super Uber Trick, which defies gravity and makes you feel young again.



Preorder Watch

STORE	PRE-ORDER	PRICE	SHIP DATE
Amazon.com	Yes	\$49.99	12/16/01
BestBuy.com	No	N/A	N/A
Buy.com	Yes	\$49.99	11/14/01
EBGames.com	Yes	\$49.99	11/13/01
GameStop.com	Yes	\$49.99	11/13/01

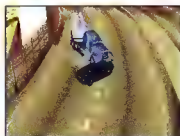
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Burnout

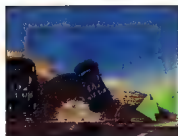
Do NOT try this at home

Last month we brought you a first look at **Criterion Software's** new racing game (due out in **November**, courtesy of **Acclaim**); this month we were able to get our hands on a playable copy. Believe us when we say this is one *intense* racing game: In order to truly compete, you need to drive on the knife edge of control—weaving in and out of traffic, sliding around turns, and generally staying just an eyblink away from a spectacular crash. And right now, the game only includes Time Trial mode. We can't wait to see the mayhem introduced by multiplayer competition.

We're also looking forward to seeing the rest of the 14 tracks, the Duel mode (race the computer for new cars), and the Replay mode, which is expected to allow slo-mo, pausing, rewinding and adjusting the camera to relive every brutal crash.



Sure, you're not supposed to crash...but how else are you going to see one of Burnout's coolest features?



Feel the Burn

One of the innovative features of Burnout is the "Burn Meter." This is sort of a turbo with a twist: In order for the meter to fill up, you need to drive dangerously. That's right—Burnout encourages near misses, drifting around turns, and driving into oncoming traffic. Once the meter is full, you can "burn" it down, which provides a healthy turbo boost and some very nice motion-blur effects.



Test Drive

The granddaddy of racing games gets updated for PS2 and is, effectively, completely reinvented. **Pitbull Syndicate** is currently putting the finishing touches on the game (the seventh entry to the series), and, for all intents and purposes, has taken things back to the beginning again. Clearly intending to nip at Gran Turismo 3's heels, the game features some stunning car models and some truly gorgeous environments. Watch for this from **Infogrames** in **November**.



E.T.: Return to the Green Planet

Next year's rerelease of *E.T.* to theaters everywhere has spawned a marketing rebirth for the character, and **NewKidCo** hasn't left out video games from the mix. Return to the Green Planet adapts the 1985 sequel novel, *The Book of the Green Planet*, into a PS2 action/adventure full of colorful characters and, well, intergalactic botany. Due in **March**, the game is still incredibly early—but we think it's safe to say it already beats the Atari 2600 version. (Well...we think.)

ACTUAL SCREEN SHOT

BULLET-TIME GAMEPLAY—A FIRST IN GAMING SLO-MO GIVES YOU AN INVENTIVE ADVANTAGE OVER YOUR OPPOSITION. AND IT ALSO HAPPENS TO BE THE MOST FREQUENT TOOL DEVICE EVER EMPLOYED IN AN ACTION GAME. —PC GAMER

REALISM TO THE MAX—THE FIRST PC GAME WITH PHOTO-DIGITIZED TEXTURES, RADIANT LIGHTING AND HARDWARE, ALL COMBINED.

PLAY IT YOUR WAY—AUTO-ADJUSTING GAMEPLAY, ANOTHER FIRST IN GAMING, SELF-ADJUSTING DIFFICULTY KEEPS YOU IN THE SWEET SPOT OF GAMEPLAY BUSS.

"HIGH-INTENSITY, TWO-FISTED GUNPLAY WITH HONG KONG-STYLE CINEMATOGRAPHY, COMPLETE WITH PLAYABLE SLO-MO AND BULLET-TIME. THIS GAME JUST ROCKS." —NEXTGEN

"ONE OF THE COOLEST, AND INCREDIBLY SIGNIFICANT THINGS ABOUT MAX PAYNE CAN'T BE SEEN IN ANY SCREENSHOT. IT'S THE STORY...THE STORY IS ALWAYS IN PLAY, AND EFFECTS EVERYTHING YOU DO." —3D ACTION PLANET



VIOLENCE
BLOOD



PlayStation 2

The background of the entire advertisement is a dark, gritty scene. In the center, a man with dark hair and a serious expression (Max Payne) is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark jacket. He is looking slightly to the right. The background is a dark wall with many bullet holes. To the left, there is a framed sign with some text that is partially obscured but includes words like "YODKA" and "BUTTER AND". To the right, there is a bright, fiery explosion or fire.

**NEW YORK. FUGITIVE UNDERCOVER COP.
NOTHING TO LOSE.**

MAX PAYNE

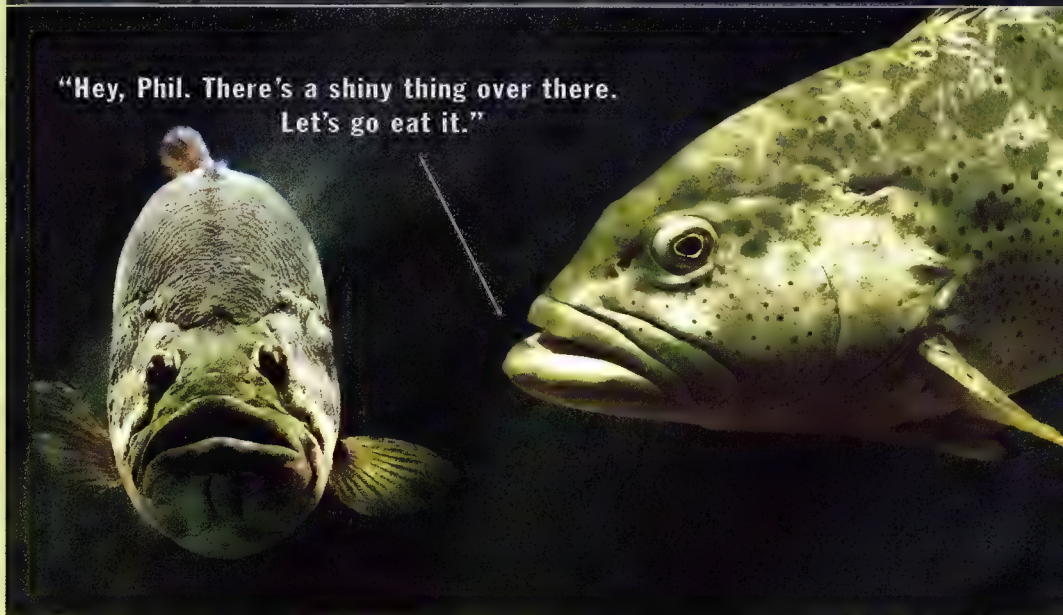
EVERYTHING RIPPED APART IN A NEW YORK MINUTE... MAX PAYNE IS A MAN WITH NOTHING TO LOSE IN THE VIOLENT, COLD URBAN NIGHT. A FUGITIVE UNDERCOVER COP FRAMED FOR MURDER, AND NOW HUNTED BY COPS AND THE MOB, MAX IS A MAN WITH HIS BACK AGAINST THE WALL, FIGHTING A BATTLE HE CANNOT HOPE TO WIN. PREPARE FOR A NEW BREED OF DEEP ACTION GAME. PREPARE FOR PAIN... DEVELOPED BY REMEDY ENTERTAINMENT AND PRODUCED BY 3D REALMS, MAX PAYNE IS A RELENTLESS STORY-DRIVEN GAME ABOUT A MAN ON THE EDGE, FIGHTING FOR HIS JUSTICE WHILE UNCOVERING PLOT-TWISTS AND TWISTED THUGS IN THE GRITTY BOWELS OF NEW YORK DURING THE CENTURY'S WORST BLIZZARD.

MAXPAYNE.COM

**"Fish are tactical thinkers. You gotta outsmart 'em.
You can't just toss in a lure and expect them to bite."**



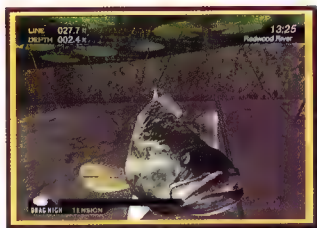
**"Hey, Phil. There's a shiny thing over there.
Let's go eat it."**



PlayStation®2



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quest for legendary lunkers
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the water with dynamic
camera movements.



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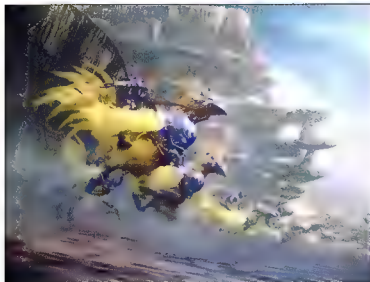




Final Fantasy X

Your monthly dose of X

With each release, the Final Fantasy games have depended more and more on cinematics for storytelling—but Final Fantasy X surely takes the cake now. Though filled with incredibly lush and lively computer-generated cutscenes, everything works so much better this time around thanks to the PS2's DVD video playback. These Hollywood-quality CG sequences—arguably Square's finest yet—look absolutely stunning on PS2, making it truly seem as though you are playing through a wonderful fantasy epic. Even better, this time around the game perfectly integrates CG scenes and real-time graphics. You often find yourself wondering what is pre-rendered and what is real-time, a feat accomplished in very few PS2 games thus far. You'll see what we mean in **January**.



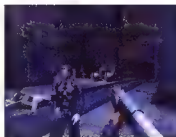
Deus Ex: The Conspiracy

It hasn't been dumbed down at all

The praise piled upon Deus Ex is unprecedented. Not since the release of Half-Life a few years ago has the game-playing world been so united in their opinion of a PC game. Part shooter, part role playing game, part action/adventure, it provides a unique gaming environment that allows you to tackle the problems posed in a variety of different ways. Since no single solution to each puzzle or situation exists in the game, you take the resources at your disposal and make do. Just like—shock, horror—real life.

The PS2 version of Deus Ex promises a faithful port of the original. At first, there had been fears that the complex control scheme of the PC game would be "dumbed down" for console gamers, thus diminishing its impact. This isn't the case, though, and the teams from **Eidos Interactive** and **Ion Storm** have completely re-engineered the game to work effectively with the Dual Shock 2.

If you like your games moody and futuristic, Deus Ex is going to be right up your alley. It's a shame that its success could be affected by the fact it's out the same time as Metal Gear Solid 2. Perhaps you should consider making two game purchases in **mid-November**.



Preorder Watch

STORE	PRE-ORDER	PRICE	SHIP DATE
Amazon.com	Y	\$49.99	11/16/01
BestBuy.com	N	N/A	N/A
Buy.com	Y	\$48.99	11/14/01
EBGames.com	Y	\$49.99	11/13/01
GameStop.com	Y	\$49.99	11/13/01
all data as of 9/3/01			



You can even check your hair in the mirror as you blast a foe to hell, you vain bastard, you.





PlayStation 2

Smash! Hit!

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Violence

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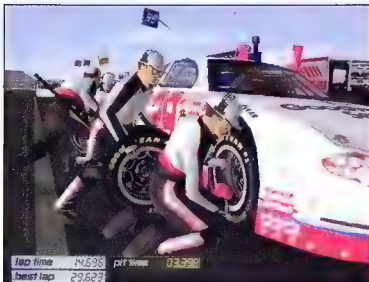
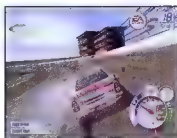
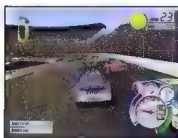
NASCAR Thunder 2002

The Thunder rolls

Treating NASCAR like a real sport? Who'd do such a thing? The answer is **EA Sports' Tiburon** crew (you know, the Madden guys). Now rednecks the world over will be able to check stats on everything from pole positions to the rookie points for more than 55 drivers (including guys like Jeff Gordon, Bobby Labonte and rookie-sensation Kevin Harvick). Plus, players can create their own drivers and cars, complete with real sponsors like NBC, Goodyear and Prestone, among others.

But the thing that'll really whip the mulleted masses into a frenzy is NASCAR Thunder 2002's 43-car field in every race. The constant traffic you're forced to contend with on short tracks like Bristol and Richmond promises to make this game so much more than simply driving in really fast circles.

And to top it off, Thunder features a career mode for the first time in the franchise's history. Create a car and driver, then race hard to impress and sign new sponsors and eventually win eight championships (which is one more than both Richard Petty and Dale Earnhardt, for those of you who were wondering). Look for Thunder to make some noise this **November**.



WWF SmackDown! Just Bring It

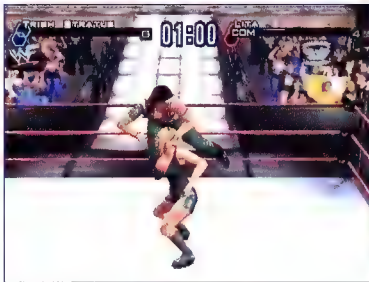
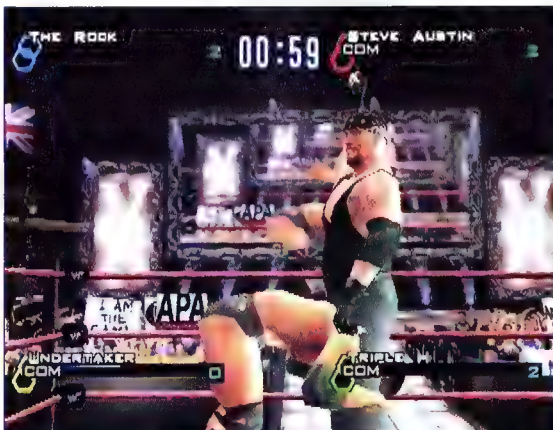
This is what The Rock's been cookin'

Anyone playing through the PS one SmackDown! series surely took a moment of pause before and after showing a digital fist down some wrestler's polygonal throat. The moment of pause was spent patiently considering the technological limits of the PS one, and whether or not **THQ** and SmackDown! creator **Yuke's** could use the PS2 to overwhelm even the most die-hard wrestling fans' imaginations when the game is released in **October**. Could this game-making team reignite that constantly flickering video game wrestling fire that burns so deeply within us all?

The answer is a real hardy "probably." Considering the strides between the original SmackDown! and *Know Your Role*, it's obvious that they have their finger on the pulse of pro wrestling and all of the hurricane changes that can sweep over the Federation in the course of one month.

Just Bring It features 36 of the top WWF superstars, including SmackDown! newcomers William Regal, Molly Holly and Raven. If someone's missing from the roster that you really want to see (meaning pretty much anyone new since this whole Alliance business began a few months back...sorry, Booker T), don't fret. The Create A Superstar feature is ocean-deep, though it can too easily delve into the ridiculous. With the PS2's power, there can now be as many as five wrestlers in the ring at once, instead of four from the originals. This comes in handy when you're battling in the six-man tag-team match where it's pretty much mayhem with the ruse of conformity.

The jury is still out on whether or not including announcers Tazz and Michael Cole was a good idea, but we're definitely fans of the way the audience holds up signs taunting and lauding their favorite wrestlers. (We question the *realism*, though—all the words on those signs are spelled correctly!)



Project 0

Tecmo tackles horror gaming

Move over, Resident Evil. If you thought flesh-eating zombies were scary, picture a renegade Ghostbuster wearing a Japanese schoolgirl outfit. Thankfully much sexier than a transvestite Harold Ramis, errant waif Miku stars in Project 0, Tecmo's new horror action-adventure extravaganza. Less Splatthorhouse than Silent Hill, it's psychological terror on a nerve-wracking scale, only with more Kodak moments than the average waking nightmare.

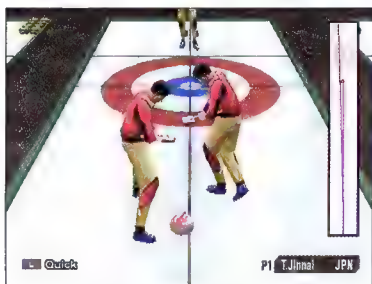
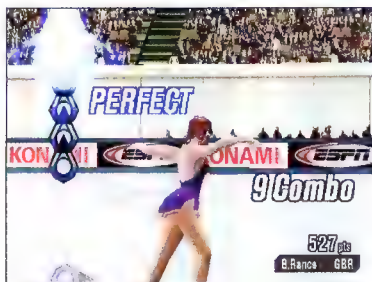
Following her brother's disappearance, Miku unwisely enters mysterious Himuro Mansion hot on his trail. Finding anyone among the dark, enclosed manor passages won't be easy, though; 30-40 rooms, plus an attic, Japanese garden, temple and cemetery await exploration. From a third-person view, you'll skulk around for 20-30 hours in the dark with a flashlight, searching for clues, surmounting puzzles, and fending off ghosts using an ordinary camera.

When not admiring a grainy, gritty presentation or freaking out over flashbacks and brief glimpses of motion, attacks come fast and furious. The locals are rather, er, spirited, and attack from all directions. Switching into a 3D, first-person camera perspective, you must quickly snap photos of marauding ghosts or face health-sapping hugs (reminds you of your ex, eh?). By doing so, undead souls are captured on film and saved in an album of 40 pictures that can be edited, added to, and maintained for posterity.

Like most spooky titles, Project 0 drips with ambience. From blurring effects to wicked in-game cinematics and hazy motion filters, no expense has been spared. Additionally, camera usage isn't just a gimmick—photographing certain objects or areas reveals hidden hints. Audible creepiness abounds as well, with the sound of wind blowing or footfalls echoing throughout the manse ever present.

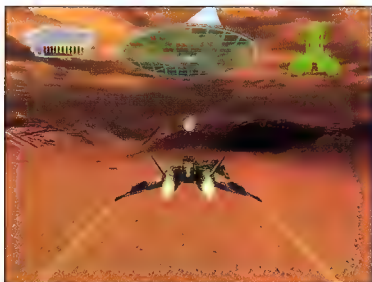
Tecmo promises minor changes before the stateside release **next year** (see the aforementioned girly costume). Regardless, Project 0 won't be just distinctly Japanese in origin when it arrives, but supremely unnerving to boot. Sleep well, horror fans...





ESPN Int'l Winter Games 2002

Last fall, International Track & Field swept through the *DPM* office like mad, as the assortment of creatively competitive events addicted everyone. We hooted, we hollered. We rejoiced in breaking world records. Now Konami and ESPN return in January with the winter version of their summer success, and we're equally enthusiastic. All types of skiing (from downhill to freestyle) lead the charge, while figure skating and curling are sprinkled in to test your Olympic mettle.



Defender

At last, Midway has proven it has the goods to deliver a topnotch remake, as demonstrated recently by Spy Hunter (see Reviews). But does developer 7 Studios (Legion: The Legend of Excalibur) have what it takes to repeat the magic for the reimagining of the 1980 arcade classic Defender? Boasting a gameplay mix of action and strategy (and a pretty sweet opening CG sequence, which we've already seen), it certainly has potential. We just have to wait 'til 2002.

Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance

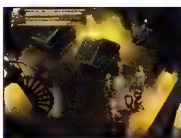
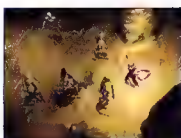
Not your PC's Baldur's Gate

Thud! With an unsuspected blow to the back of your head, a group of bandits has welcomed you to the port town of Baldur's Gate by knocking you out cold and taking all of your possessions. When you come to, only one thought resonates in your mind: revenge.

So sets the stage for Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance, the first PS2 offering from Interplay in the critically acclaimed and wildly popular PC franchise of the past few years. But, if you've read up on this one since we started covering it several months ago, you know not to expect a port of a Baldur's Gate PC title—not even the same style of gameplay. Rather, this one adopts a much more Diablo-esque hack-'n'-slash mentality, coupled with an admirable amount of RPG depth—just as you'd expect from something bearing the Dungeons & Dragons Forgotten Realms label.

We've spent a solid eight hours with the game so far, and boredom has never once entered into the picture. Beating up on the legions of giant rats, kobolds, skeletons, zombies, gelatinous cubes and more has a particularly addictive quality, as you work toward the next plot point and gain experience and gold for some truly kick-ass weapons and armor with which to equip your human archer, dwarven fighter or sultry elfen sorceress.

Few PS2 games thus far have impressed us aesthetically as much as Dark Alliance. Whether they come via the jaw-dropping water effects, the particle-effect-happy spells or simply the lush, interactive backgrounds, the game's graphics should entice anyone remotely interested in the genre. There's some great ambience included as well, such as the ghosts that wander the Crypt, not there to harm you...just kind of there. A second player can even join the action, making for a fully cooperative quest if you want it, when Dark Alliance debuts in November.

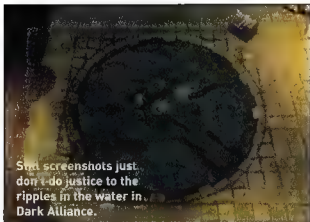


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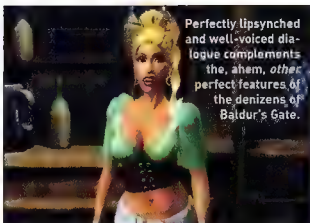
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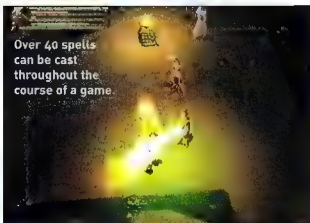
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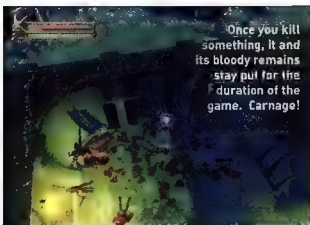
Send screenshots just, don't do justice to the ripples in the water in Dark Alliance.



Perfectly lipsynched and well-voiced dialogue complements the, ahem, *other* perfect features of the denizens of Baldur's Gate.



Over 40 spells can be cast throughout the course of a game.



Once you kill something, it and its bloody remains stay put for the duration of the game. Carnage!

Stylin'

A big part of being a hero is looking good while you slay your monsters. Dark Alliance allows you a huge wardrobe of various types of armor throughout the course of a game. You can even go about fighting the forces of evil in just your underwear (right). (That really doesn't offer much protection to you, though.)



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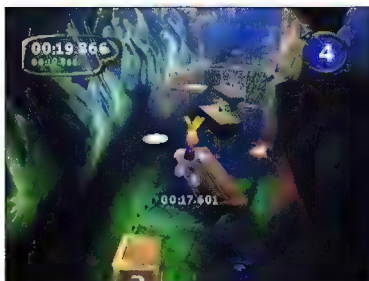
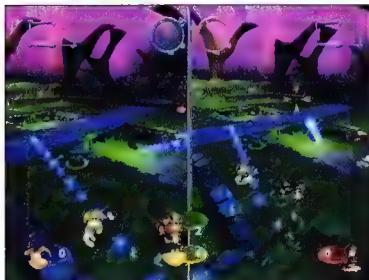
PlayStation 2

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MXrider

That big brown splotch on the bottom of this screen might not seem all that impressive at first, but consider this: It's actually a glop of mud sent at the MXrider's in-game camera on a rain-soaked track (notice the puddles up ahead, as well). It's the kind of detail that developer **Paradigm** (SpyHunter) seems intent on throwing into its **November** release for **Infogrames**, along with some great-looking tracks. Also cool: Perform tricks to gain popularity and sponsorships



Rayman Arena

Thinking that some moron in a rush might actually mistake the "M" in Rayman M for Mature (it was short for Multiplayer, by the way), **Ubi Soft** changed the name of this **December** release to the far-less-confusing Rayman Arena. Up to four players can choose among the eight selectable characters and compete in 24 different races and arena battles. While the melee levels could use some polish, the foot races are already proving to be a good bit of mindless fun.

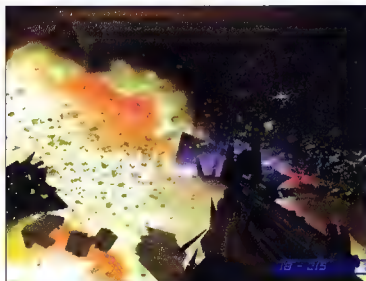
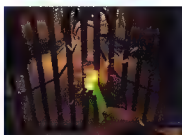
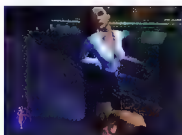
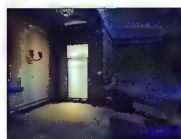
James Bond 007 in... Agent Under Fire

Possibly Bond's finest PlayStation outing yet

About a year ago, we saw two PS2 Bond titles from **EA Games** in our future: *The World Is Not Enough* and *007 Racing*. But they both eventually got canceled. Nixed. Eighty-sixed. Rising from the ashes, however, comes a veritable amalgam of the two—a completely original story known as *Agent Under Fire*.

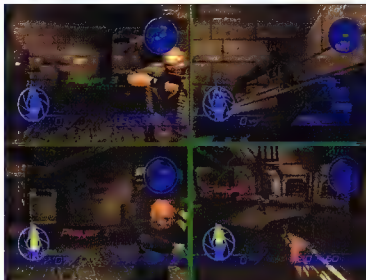
What we've sampled of the game so far shows promise, with its gameplay that ranges from first-person shooter action based on the *Quake III* engine to some wicked car combat. We were most impressed with the game's tank level, in which you blast away with the steel behemoth's gatling gun and turret as you enjoy the on-rails ride. And since everything is destructible, you can wreak havoc upon the poor European town you drive through. Trust us, it's loads of fun.

Agent Under Fire also features a multiplayer mode, which EA claims will capture the magic of *N64's GoldenEye*. It's too early to tell, but you can judge for yourself in **November**



Multiplayer

Go grab some friends and a Multitap! Ever since *GoldenEye* was released on Nintendo 64, a good multiplayer mode has pretty much been the requirement for Bond games. *Agent Under Fire* comes through with such a feature filled with different stages to choose from and a bunch of different options to select. And the best part is, the game manages to keep things running at 60 frames per second so that you can actually see what's going on.





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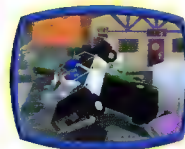


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PlayStation.2



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Suggestive Themes
Violence



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Wizardry: Tale of the Forsaken Land

The title was in serious doubt when we first previewed *Atlus'* November RPG, but it appears that the right to use the well-known Wizardry name is finally official. Like in the revolutionary PC series that helped popularize RPGs in the early '80s, *Forsaken Land* places you into a huge 3D dungeon teeming with all sorts of interesting creatures. You can even utilize special attacks with other party members.



The Thing

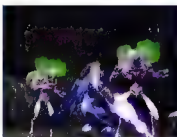
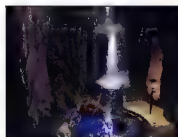
While plundering its back catalog of intellectual copyrights, it's clear that *Universal* stumbled across the obvious: John Carpenter's classic horror flick *The Thing*—good candidate for survival-horror game. U.K.-based developer *Computer Artworks* is on the case, and is trying hard to bring some new pizzazz to the genre. By using the main themes of the movie, fear and trust, players must anticipate the emotional reactions of other characters in order to succeed.

Soul Reaver 2

About bloody time, too

To read the game description found on *Crystal Dynamics'* and *Eidos Interactive's* Web site, www.eidosinteractive.com, we'd forgive you for thinking of it as the sleeve notes to a Goth concept album from the mid-'80s. "Raziel emerges from the Chronoplast time portal, and returns to different eras of Nosgoth's past in his relentless pursuit of Kain," it begins before continuing in prose that might as well have a Siouxsie and the Banshees or Bauhaus track playing in the background. "Over the course of his journey, he unearths the mysteries of Nosgoth's ancient races, and exposes the secrets behind the corruption of the Pillars and the vampire genocide. Confronting the shadows of his unremembered past, he discovers a web of destiny stretching eons into..." blah blah blah, destiny, boys in lipstick, vengeance, black nail polish, etc., etc.

Anne Rice-worthy romanticism aside, *Soul Reaver 2* has been eagerly awaited for far too long now. The original game left players with a cliffhanger ending that made *The Empire Strikes Back* look subtle, but rest assured, everything comes to a satisfying conclusion this time. Honest. The game is also completely "exclusive" to PS2 now. So your Xbox-purchasing chums won't be able to enjoy it.

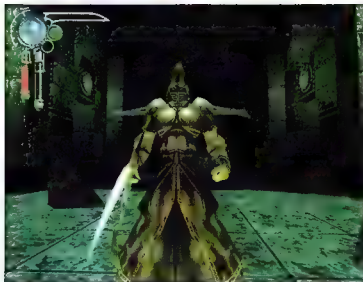
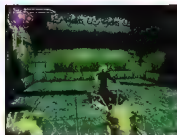
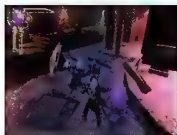


Blood Omen 2

Kain's sequel. Is it part 2? Or is it really part 4?

As we've mentioned before, although Blood Omen 2 is the second game that "stars" Kain, it's actually the fourth in **Eidos Interactive's** "Legacy of Kain" series. Chronologically, though, it's the second game in the overall timeline, and deals with Kain's transformation from Boy Scout vampire to full-on Vampire Scout with all the merit badges: Practical Impaling, Head Off-Ripping, and both junior and advanced Blood Sucking, to name a few. He's also learned some rather nifty stealth tactics that wouldn't look out of place in a certain other big-name action game that's also due to hit this **November**.

From the very earliest stages of Blood Omen 2, it's clear that Kain's becoming one hell of a mean muddyfunster while also growing a mane of hair that wouldn't look out of place should he decide that his true calling is as rhythm guitarist for '80s hair-metal wonders Brtny Fox. While the story is the usual vengeance, anger and nastiness guff that you'd expect from something involving a vampire with an attitude problem, it's also worth paying some attention to the presentation of the game. So powerful are the technical gubbins driving Blood Omen 2 that it will provide the basis for the majority of all **Crystal Dynamics'** games from now on, replacing the "guts of Gex" that drives the Soul Reaver games.



Solid Kain

Sneaking around is of paramount importance in Blood Omen 2. While Kain is a pretty mean dude who can take on pretty much anyone, it's in his best interest to keep out of sight whenever possible. By stalking his prey in a more considered fashion, he can ensure that he isn't discovered by any meddling humans who think they understand this whole vampire malarkey. An ability to turn into a cloud of mist helps Kain's cause enormously.

Pre-Order Watch

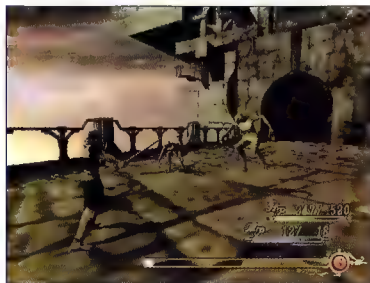
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World of Outlaws: Sprint Cars 2002

Since 1998, **Ratbag Games** has developed racing titles for PC using its Difference Engine. Its first foray into console gaming, World of Outlaws, hits PS2 this **October** for **Infogrames**, throwing us into the fastest-growing motor sport in America. The game includes 12 real-life tracks, vehicle damage, day and night races, support for as many as four players, and speeds exceeding 160 miles per hour.



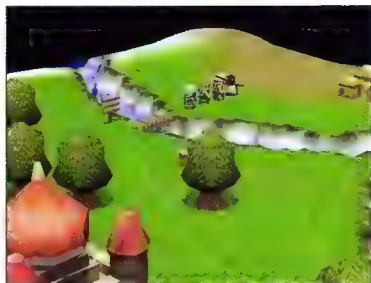
Tsunagai

In a wise move, **Attus** has picked up Sony of Japan's 3D RPG Tsunagai for a release in the States this **winter**. Featuring a quest that revolves around a soul possessing other characters in order to progress the narrative, Tsunagai appears to offer a fresh idea to the RPG genre. Also featuring a Celtic-themed soundtrack from renowned composer Yasunori Mitsuda (Chrono Cross) and an immersive battle system, this may actually be a true quality package.



The Terminator

Not many prequels take place in the future. Not so for **Infogrames'** video game version of *The Terminator*, however. Set in 2029, it sets the stage for the first film, when human resistance leader John Connor sent Kyle Reese back in time to save his mother from cyborg Arnold so that he could be born in the first place. You'll experience a series of battles with Skynet, the rogue artificial intelligence bent on destroying us all. We'll have lots more for you by **spring**



RPG Maker

If there were any faults with the first *RPG Maker*, the severely dated graphics, clunky menu management and extremely static environment sets were certainly among the most significant. Japanese developer **Enterbrain** hopes to address these issues with the PS2 version, due out this **December** in Japan. Not only will you be able to build a fully 3D environment [complete with overworld], but the game also supports USB keyboards. No word yet on a U.S. release.



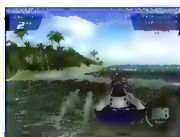
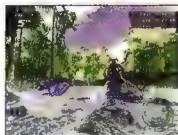
Splashdown

Monkey Sea, monkey Doo

Picture ATV Offroad Fury's expansive environments, with the realistically rolling landscapes, the impressive sight distances and the loads of scenery. Now, picture those environments flooded with water—water that looks so realistic that it invariably makes onlookers stop and stare. Obviously, you're going to have to ditch those ATVs, though. How about Sea-Doo's?

OK, it might seem like we're getting a little far from the original example, but trust us when we say the comparison is valid. **Infogrames'** *Splashdown* is being developed by **Rainbow Studios**, who created *ATV Offroad Fury*. So the games are structured similarly, share a similar graphical style, and feature the same mix of white-knuckle racing and trick execution. This time, though, tricks are necessary for regular racing, since they contribute to your Performance Meter which, when filled, improves both acceleration and top speed. The competition in *Splashdown* seems much more brutal than in *ATV* (in this early stage, anyway), since collisions with opponents can frequently send you spinning off course.

You'll also have to pay closer attention to the pitch of your Sea-Doo. Leaning back makes you hydroplane, gaining speed at the cost of handling. And leaning forward lets you dip underwater and come up quickly, useful for bunny-hopping obstacles. You'll be able to explore the intricacies when the game is released in **November**



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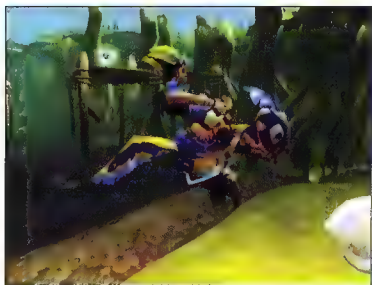
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Jak and Daxter: The Precursor Legacy

Still on track for a **December** release, **Naughty Dog's** new game could well be the last-minute holiday hit this year. We've covered it extensively in the past few months, but it's so gorgeous we want to share every new screenshot we get with you. Featuring lovable characters, incredible animation and a seamless world (with no load times—yay!) it's clear that the Dogs haven't lost their touch.



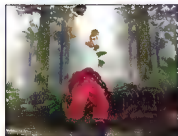
Driven

Scheduled for an **October** release, **bam!**'s game adaptation of Sylvester Stallone's racing flick is nearly ready. And although it doesn't seem as in-depth as most F1-style racing games, *Driven* does feature a unique twist—if you race well, you can fall into "the zone" and get a speed boost (the sound drops to a whisper and the screen gets fuzzy, as seen in the pic above). It's interesting, to say the least. Stallone also provides vocal commentary. Which, too, is interesting.

Tekken 4

Permission to start drooling

The underlying *Tekken* storyline is getting quite complicated these days. Some of you will be surprised that there even is a point to the game, besides beating seven shades out of a bunch of characters—but there is. So here's what's up: Heihachi (old guy, balding!) has been trying to splice Ogre DNA with his own so that he can become more powerful. Unfortunately, to do this he needs the Devil Gene, which is something he lacks. Jin (mean-looking dude, sort of the "hero") and Kazuya (fancy pants, pointy hair, the "bad guy" and Jin's pop!) do have this gene, however, and that's why they have a tendency to mutate into purple things with wings and laser eyes. Kazuya was presumed dead at the end of *Tekken 2*, but he was in fact cloned and is now back and meaner than ever. He's pissed at Heihachi, who wants to steal Kazuya's genes (not his jeans, although they are kinda cool-looking). So a fourth Iron Fist tournament is announced to lure everyone out of hiding. In the process, all the old favorites turn up, many looking very different and some even fighting in different styles (you should see Yoshimitsu's death mask/butterfly wings getup, along with a host of new characters. **Namco** has yet to announce a firm launch date yet, but we anticipate something possibly by **spring**



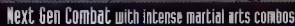
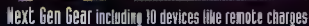
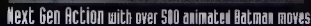
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PlayStation 2

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Moto GP 2

Video game Superbike racing really doesn't get much better than this, folks. What you see here are first shots of the sequel to Namco's original PS2 bike hit. While not much is known about Moto GP 2, you can expect it to be filled with all sorts of graphical upgrades, more tracks, and the 2001 roster of bikes and riders. Unfortunately, we don't have a U.S. release date for the game yet, but we've been assured that it'll be out within the **first half of 2002**.



FIFA 2002

If you thought last year's FIFA was groundbreaking, wash that idea from your memory bank. EA Sports' new FIFA, due in **October**, is spectacular, down to the second analog stick. Passing, a shortcoming on the PS2 debut, has been redone. It's pressure-sensitive, to start with, and now you can execute give-and-gos with the right analog stick. Wise move. The analog stick makes for precision and quickness that can penetrate the defense. Expect this FIFA to knock your spikes off.

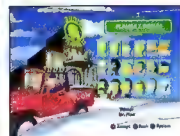
The Simpsons: Road Rage

Crazy Taxi—Simpsons style

Even though countless Simpsons games have hit various consoles ever since Bart battled the Space Mutants 10 years ago, it's safe to say that nary a one has offered anything particularly innovative—stuff that future video games attempt to emulate in order to achieve commercial success. And that's certainly not about to change with the **fall** release of Road Rage from EA Games. This is Crazy Taxi: The Simpsons Version through and through. But who ever said there's anything wrong with that?

Actually, it can be said that Road Rage has a few things lacking from Sega's instant (and, quite obviously from this direct knockoff, influential) classic. For one thing, you've got a whole lot more than four characters to zoom maniacally through Springfield with—18 in all. In a real "why didn't anyone else think of that before?" move, earning enough fares at the end of a turn allows you to add to your initial five characters by selecting the unlockable one of your choice. And in addition to simply having more characters, Road Rage offers customized rides for everyone, which, unlike Crazy Taxi, all handle uniquely. Better yet, the vehicles themselves have often been seen in episodes of the show, whether they be as well-known as Homer's Family Sedan or as obscure as Barney's Plow King or Marge's Canyonero SUV.

And if nods to single episodes with the cars aren't enough to satisfy Simpsons fans, the very scenery—simply seeing a 3D Springfield first-hand—should do the trick. You'll notice signs promoting Mayor Quimby, *The Itchy & Scratchy Movie*, Channel Six News With Kent Brockman and more. You'll drive through and/or pass such landmarks as the Duff Brewery, Springfield Elementary and the nuclear power plant. Meanwhile, tons of hilarious dialogue complements the action. It may not offer anything incredibly new, but Road Rage seems primed to be the one game that Simpsons fans have been waiting for.





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Kingdom Hearts

As if a collaboration between **Disney** and **Square** to create an RPG isn't intriguing enough, get this: Final Fantasy character designer Tetsuya Nomura (VII, VIII, X) has been tapped to direct the project. The game, which has been in development for two years already and has a team of 100 working on it, will feature Disney favorites like Donald, Goofy and Dumbo alongside a few all-new characters. We can't wait to help find and rescue King Mickey in the **fall of 2002**.



Mortal Kombat PS2

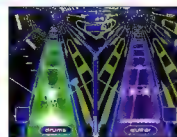
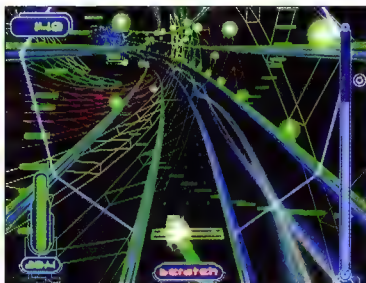
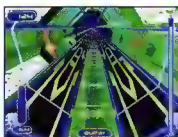
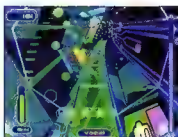
Hey, look! It's our old friend Jax! Remember him? We last saw him in the horrible, terrible, awful, horrendous (there just aren't enough words in the thesaurus to describe how bad it was) Mortal Kombat: Special Forces. Well, at some point **next fall**, he, Scorpion and all your old MK friends return to their roots in what **Midway** boasts will "once again reinvent the fighting-game genre with never-before-seen features and a completely new fighting engine." We shall see.

Frequency

The truth Hertz

"Hey, man," you smirk, "I've played BeatMania. I've played Dance Dance Revolution. I'm down with the rhythm games, yo." Think so, tough guy? Wait 'til you check out **Sony CEA's** newest offering. Think of it as a BeMani game raised to a higher power—in order to complete each song, you have to perfect each element separately. It works like this: You start off on a single track (drums, bass, etc.), where you have a few opportunities to follow the rhythm by hitting Square, Triangle or Circle in time to the music. Once you've finished a measure, the track "locks in" for the rest of the song section—now you move to the next track and start all over again. To make things more challenging, you have to repeat this process for each segment of the song. Sounds difficult, eh? It is—at least in the preview version.

As you open up new songs, you gain the ability to play them in **Remix mode**, in which you call the shots. Want the drums double-time? Go for it. Don't like the synth? Drop it. The game keeps the rhythm while you lay down the tracks. Then, you can save your remix to a memory card and play it as a level within the game. Neat, huh? What's even cooler is that both these game modes can be played online with up to four players when Sony's network adapter launches in **November**.



Multimix

Frequency allows two to four people to play in person (via splitscreen) or online, either competitively, where whoever hits the most notes wins, or cooperatively in **Remix mode**.



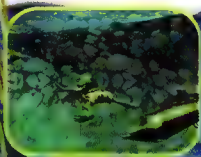
Frogger's back!*



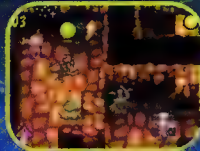
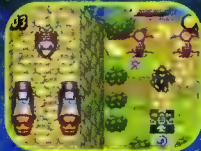
*also available in convenient travel size.

Frogger

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Full 3-D gameplay on PlayStation®2.



Classic Frogger action on Game Boy® Advance.

GAME BOY ADVANCE

PlayStation 2



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PlayStation 2

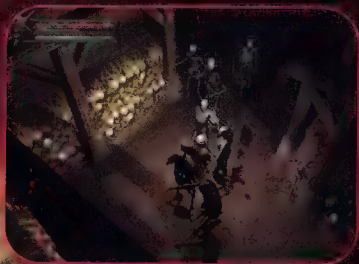


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Baldur's Gate

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OPPOSITION



ENCOUNTER
MYSTICAL BEASTS



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Coming Soon

October

American Deer Hunter	Interplay	Sports
Arc the Lad Collection	Working Designs	RPG
Castlevania Chronicles	Konami	Action
Deep Sea Fishing	Interplay	Sports
Dexter's Laboratory	bam	Action
Hidden & Dangerous	Take 2	Action
Hoshigami: Ruining Blue Earth	Atlus	Strategy
Jungstret Kindergarten	Knowledge Adv	Education
Monsters, Inc.	Sony CEA	Action
Papam Sam	Infogrames	Education
Power Rangers: Time Force	THQ	Action
The Powerpuff Girls	bam!	Fighting
Razor Racing	Crave	Racing
The Weakest Link	Activision	Trivia
Where/Wor/lo/Carmen Sandiego?	The Learning Co.	Education

November

Castrol Honda VTR	Interplay	Racing
Dragon Warrior VII	Enix	RPG
E.T.: Interplanetary Mission	NewKidCo	Action
FIFA 2002	EA Sports	Sports
Harry Potter & Sorcerer's Stone	EA Games	Action
Jeanette Lee's Virtual Pool	Interplay	Sports
Jesse James' 6-Shooter Showdown	Jhi Soft	Shooter
Mega Man X6	Capcom	Action
NBA Live 2002	EA Sports	Sports
Planet of the Apes	Ubi Soft	Adventure
Snoopy's Party Adventure	Infogrames	Action
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	Activision	X-Sports
Twisted Metal: Small Brawl	Sony CEA	Action
V.I.P.	Ubi Soft	Action

December

Cubix	3DO	Action
Hooters Road Trip	Ubi Soft	Racing
You Don't Know Jack PlayStation	Sierra	Trivia
Zoboomafoo	Encore	Education

Future Releases

Black & White	TBA	Adventure
Dragon Warrior IV	Enix	RPG
NHL FaceOff 2002	Sony CEA	Sports

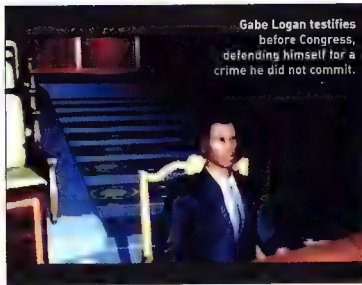
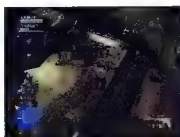
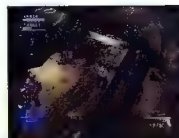
Syphon Filter 3

Gabe gives one last go on PS one

Because of the proximity of their release dates, Syphon Filter was inevitably land perhaps unfairly compared with Metal Gear Solid, despite several important differences in gameplay. While MGS focused more on stealth and strategy, Syphon Filter was primarily an action game for those who were looking for something else—and judging by the sales charts and critical acclaim, many people were. Last year's sequel seemed overshadowed, however, by the massive attention given to the PS2 launch, and since the third installment remains on the aging PS one, there's a danger of it being overlooked by gamers who have moved on to the bigger and better. But to ignore Syphon Filter 3 looks to be a mistake, no matter how powerful your hardware. It could very well be Sony's best game of the series.

Syphon Filter 3 begins with a series of flashback missions. Testifying before Congress, Gabe Logan and his associates recount the past—drawing upon decades of action movie clichés and corny dialogue, natch—elaborating upon the events of the original Syphon Filter and leading up to the present-day conflict. The story encompasses two discs and is broken down into 18 diverse missions. In Lian Xing's first level, for example, you have to take out several sniper nests using a very cool thermal-scoped rifle, which enables you to aim through buildings. Your third mission, meanwhile, has you navigating your falling parachute into an enemy stronghold under heavy fire. As if the thermal-scoped rifle weren't cool enough, a wide selection of handguns, automatics, and other sniper rifles is at your disposal (and sadists, rejoice—the flesh-igniting taser makes a triumphant return). Like the previous games, each mission has a certain number of objectives and parameters; should you fail to meet these objectives, the level restarts at the last checkpoint (the last completed objective). There seems to be some trial-and-error gameplay involved, but the continue system is setup to be quite forgiving.

Syphon Filter 3 was released in September, and is among the last big-name releases for PS one. It appears the fast-paced action and solid graphics will provide a more than appropriate sendoff.



Gabe Logan testifies before Congress, defending himself for a crime he did not commit.



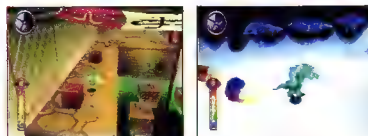
Deathmatch

New to the Syphon Filter franchise is a two-player deathmatch mode. You can select from any character in the game, from Gabe, to an evil scientist, to a random bag lady. It's your standard deathmatch fare—run around grabbing weapons, ammo and armor in an attempt to kill the other guy. Another new feature allows you to guide a character through five different types of missions, ranging from a sniper skill shot to a free-for-all shootout.



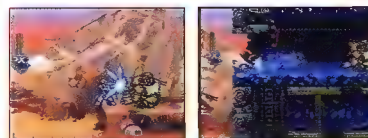
Monsters, Inc.

It's appropriate that Sony CEA's video game version of the upcoming Disney/Pixar film *Monsters, Inc.* should hit shelves **three days before the movie's Nov. 2 release**. After all, it serves as a prequel to the CG comedy extravaganza, as you assume the role of either Sulley or Mike in his training sessions at the Monsters, Inc. Academy. The game's action is your typical 15-level platforming fare, with 36 different "scars" to learn. And, of course, it all comes packed with humor.



Mega Man X6

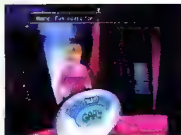
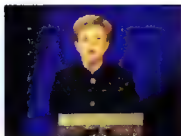
Set in the barren wastelands remaining of Earth three weeks after the events of Mega Man X5, X6 pits **Capcom's** iconic blue-clad hero against a giant rampaging rogue replit. The expected 2D side-scrolling action of the other games in the series returns complemented by some new features. Early actions in the game, for example, affect stages later on. Also, enemies appear randomly each time, and you can power up Mega Man by freeing friendly replitoids.



The Weakest Link

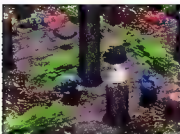
It may not seem like a game show where the whole idea is to answer as quickly as possible is entirely conducive to video game form.

Activision gets around that for *The Weakest Link* by providing four choices, usually only featuring the first letter of a word so that you're right because you know the answer (or because you guessed well). As many as seven can play, and, of course, voting comes into play as well. Just hope that you're not the one getting Ann's "good-bye."



E.T.: Interplanetary Adventure

Sure, the most lovable extra-terrestrial ever to eat a bag of Reese's Pieces might have a more advanced PS2 game in the works—but PS one owners get a shot at a day in the life of E.T. first, this **November**. As you might expect from **NewKidCo**, *Interplanetary Adventure* takes a very kid-oriented approach to the character, with plenty of healing darning flowers (he's a botanist, remember?) and attacking enemies with the energy from a heart sword. Remember that part in the film?



Dragon Warrior IV

We were kind of counting on **Enix** to wait and see how well this fall's *Dragon Warrior VII* sold before it announced the souped-up, 3D rerelease of *Dragon Warrior IV*, which we knew was headed Japan's way. But apparently, the company is already itching to send this classic RPG stateside **next year**. So just how much of a demand is there for this game? Consider that as of this writing an open NES copy is selling on eBay for \$91—and a mint-in-box one for \$157.50!

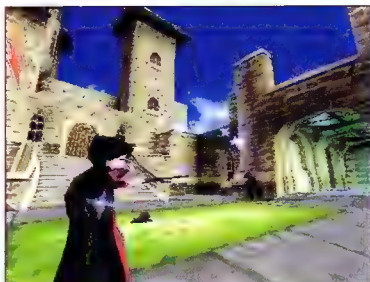
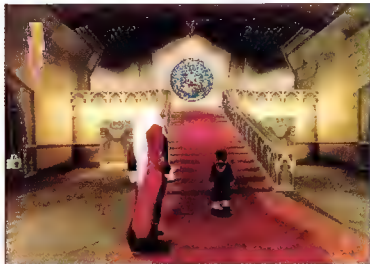


Harry Potter & the Sorcerer's Stone

All aboard the Hogwarts Express

Just in time for the **fall** release of the Harry Potter movie, **EA Games** releases *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, a 3D platform adventure set within J.K. Rowling's best-selling fantasy world. You, of course, play the role of the Boy Who Lived as he enrolls at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

Highlights of the game include minigames that reward players with valuable spells and potions, as well as flying broom-based segments. What we're really eager to see, though, is the implementation of the Quidditch game. EA's press release claims you can "lead your house to victory in the wizard sport of Quidditch." What we're wondering is whether this is actually a fleshed-out "simulation" of the sport or a stripped-down minigame. If the game does include a "real" Quidditch engine, it could conceivably add a great deal more depth and replay to what appears at this point to be a fairly standard 3D platform formula. With **Argonaut** (Croc, Alien Resurrection) designing the game, we think some technical surprises are a fairly good bet.



Pre-Order Watch

STORE	PRE-ORDER	PRICE	SHIP DATE
Amazon.com	Y	\$39.99	11/9/01
Best.com	N	\$39.99	11/7/01
EBGames.com	Y	\$39.99	11/15/01
GameStop.com	N	\$39.99	11/16/01
SamGoody.com	N	\$39.99	NA

all data as of 9/4/01

Razor Racing

Last year, **Crave** pleasantly surprised us with *Razor Freestyle Scooter*. For **October's** *Razor Racing*, expect a similar emphasis on tricks, as well as—you guessed it—plenty of racing action. Even upgrade your Razor!



V.I.P.

Luckily for **Ubi Soft**, Pamela Anderson's latest TV show, *V.I.P.*, has maintained a degree of popularity while the company has taken its sweet time with a game that made its debut at E3 2000 (we first mentioned it 18 issues ago). Specifics on gameplay are still on the light side, though we do know that you can play as all members of the *V.I.P.* crew. You've also got six minigames to master, including some combo-rhythmic sequences like in *PaRappa*. Pam bounces our way in **November**.





PlayStation 2

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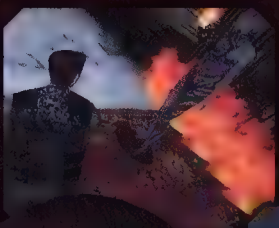
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AL



Celebrate the 5th anniversary of the most terrifying game series ever as it mutates onto the PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system. Join Claire Redfield, as she searches for her missing brother, Chris, and dig deeper into the evil doings of Umbrella Corporation. Flesh eating zombies and bio-tech monstrosities haunt your every move. As an added bonus, this special edition includes never-before-seen cut scenes and an interactive demo of the highly anticipated, Devil May Cry.

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: Veronica

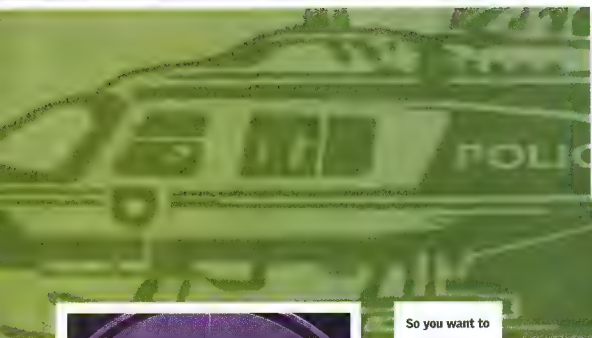
X

CAPCOM

PlayStation®2

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Liberty City. A nice place to visit, but a better place to raid. The kind of bustling metropolis where a common citizen can enjoy the urban sprawl, the ritzy beaches, the always safe, police-monitored streets.



By Todd Zuniga

So you want to be a gangster? Well, we've got just the thing. With *Grand Theft Auto 3* you'll find plenty of guns for shoot-'em-up, cars upon cars, and if you do what you're told, maybe you'll even discover a fast-track to the "easy life." Just remember to watch your back. Liberty City's isn't the kind of place to let your guard down.

Put your mind at ease knowing that the recent wave of car-jackings, the rise in prostitution and the resurgence of Mafia crimes are under control. Welcome. And, please, lock your car door.

Grand Theft



auto-III

grand theft auto III



8-Ball - Guru



Luigi Goterelli - Joey Pantoliano

IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Grand Theft Auto 3 stars these men: 8-Ball, Luigi Goterelli, Joey Leone, Tony Cipriani, and Salvatore Leone. Never heard of them? You will once the game begins. Sure, they're voiced by some of the biggest names in Mafia films and some of pop culture's most distinct voices like Joey Pantoliano, Frank Vincent, Michael Madsen, Michael Rapaport and Guru (from Gang Starr). But you won't hear these real names associated with their GTA3 counterparts. "We didn't hire them because they were famous," said Terry Donovan of Rockstar Games. Counterpart Sam Houser followed with: "We hired them because they sounded perfect for the parts we had created."



Joey Leone - Michael Rapaport



Toni Cipriani - Michael Madsen



Salvatore Leone - Frank Vincent

Joey Pantoliano by Stephen Dantieri/Corbis Outline, Michael Rapaport by Majken B. Asm/Corbis Outline, Michael Madsen by Kwaku Alston/Corbis Outline



1

It's my first 10 minutes in Liberty City. I'm standing before a complete stranger named 8-Ball. A big guy, shaved head. A voice like Arizona sand. He says he knows somebody, says he knows a spot where we can change out of these idiot-looking prison jumpsuits.

Do I trust him? Considering he just blew the Staunton Island Bridge to smithereens, killed a bushel of people and took the time to bandage up his own hands, the better question is: Do I have a choice? The answer's a quick and obvious no. Sirens are wailing and the law dogs, the fire department, the ambulances and God himself are due to rain down on this disaster any second.

So I hop in the nearest car, 8-Ball in the back with his broiled fists, and drive like mad into my new, nameless life; my old identity up in smoke with the busted bridge. Liberty City's a new world to me now. A bustling, breathing metropolis jumping with opportunity. It's night. Pocking scatters of precipitation slick the roads and blur tonight's cyclopean moon which hangs like an ornament that takes up half the sky.

I drive without regard for surrounding traffic. I cut off a kamikaze cabby, losing my front bumper and a headlight, then rip a left on red at the sight of a wailing-siren cop two blocks up. I'm doing 40 around turns, 65 down straightaways until 8-Ball directs me into the darkest pit of living space I've ever seen. I half expect to see a rat-bitten mat ironically reading: "Home Sweet Home." But, instead, I'm ankle deep in a puddle. Within seconds, I'm out of prison livery and back in the car. 8-Ball's talking about this guy he knows. Luigi.

"Who's Luigi?" No response. Great. So I drive.

2

I drive with the kind of irreverence that suggests I have political asylum, that laws don't apply to me. I'm a rush of adrenaline (and nerves). A few alley shortcuts, and 8-Ball has me hit the brakes at some bright-lights, big-city strip club with enough neon to re-create the aurora borealis. 8-Ball wrenches open the door, the pain of his skewered fists between clenched teeth. I follow him into a back alley. 8-Ball tells me to sit tight. So I sit tight.

Seconds, minutes, hours later a man comes out. I wonder if it's Luigi. "I'm Luigi," he says. He says, "8-Ball's got some business to take care of. But maybe you can do me a favor."

I know enough to keep my trap shut, so I nod in his direction. He tells me one of his girls needs a ride. His voice is the kind of cinema familiar that keeps my ears perked. He says I need to grab a car and pick her up. I turn to exit but he stops me. Tells me to keep my eyes on the road, tells me if I don't screw this up, there'll be more work for me.

I don't know which way is up or who's who. For a minute left and right are switched around. What I do know is that I've got big plans. That I'll do whatever it takes, whatever they tell me. So long as I get what I want: revenge on that gold-digging ex-girl of mine.

I head out into the mad-dash city streets. Car horns blare with their prostitutes. Buildings a mile high. This is no place I want to live. But seeing as I don't have a choice, looks like I'll just have to get used to it.

Grand Theft Auto 3 is a game. No, it's a film. No, no, it's



an interactive film. Yes, that will do. An interactive film just about sums it up.

If you're searching for a reference point, try this: Recall every gangster film you've ever seen. Pace the room, stare at the ceiling. Conjure up *The Godfather* trifecta, consider *Goodfellas*, relive *Scarface*. And while I'm divulging the ingredients to the perfect mobster-film pasta, stir in a dash of oregano and HBO's *The Sopranos* to add that extra kick of garlic to the Mafia gravy.

Now, if you can somehow wrap your mind around all of those cinematic experiences at once, and better yet, position yourself as the fictional up-and-comer within the combined ranks of these films, then you're getting warm, warm, warmer as to the experience offered when having a sit-down with GTA3. This is the type of game that makes you say, "I can't believe I just saw that," when, really, you should be saying, "I can't believe I just *did* that." But after you can't believe what you just saw/did, you're peeling around corners shedding the fuzz to the best of your ability just to do more. To get the next mission, the next rush. Then there's a twist in plot, someone thinks it best to backstab you, and somehow you never saw it coming, because you mistook this for a video game.

"In most games it's: Go from here to here to here," says the animated Sam Houser, Rockstar's president. "With GTA3, suddenly things are a little bit different."

And that "difference," no matter which mission you're working through, is that you're part of an on-the-fly gangster film. And you're the star. "Claude" from the originals has been replaced by a nameless character that is you. And you'll be doing things you've only seen while cozily watching a movie. Namely: imitating some of the grisliest acts from the greatest gangster flicks of all time. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery and GTA3 makes good on that cliché.

"We've worked really hard to make something we think is very special," says Houser. "There has never been a game like [GTA3] in terms of scope of game world and gameplay. You play a bad guy

in a bad world. That was more interesting to us than playing a hero."

This heroic villain aspect is just another punch that tells you GTA3 isn't a typical gaming experience. From the second you meet up with 9-Ball and he tells you to go with him, you know you're the one who's along for the ride. This game is a sensory blitz; a jaw-drop assault where you're constantly plumbing the depths of the never-before-seen-in-games urban underbelly. An unbearably sugarcoked world with flashbulbs of pointed humor.

After a short while you'll pause the game (you'll have to, there's no loading, so once you're in, you're in for good) and you'll think: This isn't right. Games don't do this. They're not supposed to push this many buttons and smack me right in the mouth. And right there, right when you think that, Rockstar Games has you right where they want you. At that point you're stuck in Liberty City, a new experience that's aiming, as far as we can tell, to change games forever.

I've been at this for a week. Now, at Luigi's request, I'm driving his main girl, Misty. This dame wears enough eyeshadow to be an owl and red go-go boots up to her ears. In the car the other night, giving her a ride back to the club after she turned a trick, she said she was glad Luigi *finally* found a driver he can trust. But I only half-listen to what anyone tells me. I'm busier keeping the eyes in the back of my head tuned with 20/20 vision.

We pull up in front of Joey's garage. I step inside to deliver Luigi's best wishes. A quick casing of the joint tells me he's the kind of mechanic that can "get things fixed." There are enough new BMWs under the roof to make a dealership of the place. He asks if I could do a job for him. I nod; a streamline of adrenaline wakes up my brain. He says, "There's a car stuffed with a stiff at the café near Callahan Point." The café. Yeah, I've driven past it a few times. He wants me to take the car to the crusher. "Easy job," he says. But there are no easy jobs.

MISSION: PUMP ACTION

Liberty City's prostitution ring is dominated by Luigi Goterelli, the proprietor of the top strip club in town. Lucky for you, you're on his side.

After you've done a couple of driving jobs for him, he ups the ante with his latest request. It seems a local pimp has been selling his ladies on Luigi's turf. Your job: Teach this young upstart a lesson. Translation: Risk your life to run this pimp off the road and put a bullet in his brain.



Go and take care of things for me.



HOW TO RUB OUT YOUR ENEMIES AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE

If you want to enjoy GTA3 to its fullest extent, it's best to do some homework. We've compiled a list of DVDs that'll brace you for this first video game entrant into the mob's media hierarchy. You're sure to see some copycat moments in the game that'll be found on these DVDs. And if you've already got the DVDs, wiseguy: hingedaboudit.

THE SOPRANOS: THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON (1999)

If you don't have HBO, you're a sucker. No show on your UHF dial brings you the kind of haunting character depth and brilliant acting like *The Sopranos*. This hit show follows mob boss Tony Soprano (James Gandolfini) through the difficult realities of being the head of a Mafia family in North Jersey. It's the best show on television.

GOODFELLAS (1990)

Based on a true story, *Goodfellas* follows the life of Henry Hill (Ray Liotta), a local Irish-American turned gangster who works his way through the mob in 1960s and 1970s New York. After living the good life, things go unsurprisingly haywire. After a string

of grisly murders and drug-dealing, everything starts to dissolve, leaving Hill, and his closest friends, running for their lives.

SCARFACE (1983)

In this remake of the 1932 film of the same name, Al Pacino plays Cuban emigre Tony Montana who, along with his friend, Manny Ray, builds a criminal empire in early-'80s Miami. It's a remarkably violent film which includes something to do with a chainsaw and a man being cut to pieces in a bathtub. Gruesome.

THE GODFATHER TRILOGY (1972, '74, '90)

If you ever see any movies, for the rest of your life, make sure you see the first *Godfather* and its outstanding sequel. The third one was fine, at best. The films follow the Corleone crime family from Don Vito Corleone (Marlon Brando) to his son Michael (Al Pacino) who eventually takes over. It is an arresting look at the politics of the gangster lifestyle, clearly showing the ups and downs of living a life where any slip-up can lead to your demise. Director Francis Ford Coppola delivered a brilliant cast, pinpoint scripts, and films that will stand as classics forever. If you're not willing to invest an afternoon on the Corleone saga, we sincerely hope you enjoy that wonderful Matt Damon movie you rented.

grand theft auto III

MISSION: "LIPS" FORELLI'S LAST LUNCH

Don't mistake Joey for some run-of-the-mill mechanic. He's as connected as it gets. After you earn his trust, he asks you to whack Mike "Lips" Forelli, a member of a rival family. While Lips is snacking at the local diner, you jack his car, drive it to 8-Ball's garage for a bomb, and return the car unscratched to watch the fireworks.

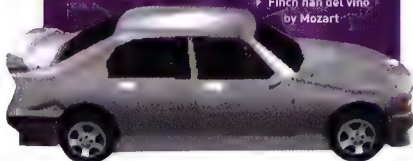


▶ NOW PLAYING



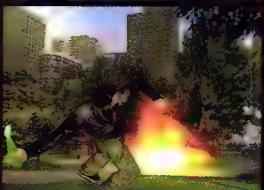
A prerequisite for working at OPM: speaking Italian. While these titles may be gibberish to you, we know their beauty to *"Non piu andrai farfallone amoroso" by Mozart*
"Le Donne E Mobile" performed by Pavarotti and Scotto

"Finch'han del vino" by Mozart



5

I jack a ride, quick as you please, and knife through traffic to the café. Once there, I hotwire the car with the "mess" in the trunk. I don't know how it happens, but somehow, I let my guard down. [Maybe I'm daydreaming of Luigi's girls.] But when I turn the ignition, the Forelli brothers—dangerously emotional after I planted the car bomb that took out Mike "Lips" Forelli two days ago—plow from the brush and open fire. On my right a sedan squeals full-speed ahead into my passenger door. Glass is everywhere, and bullets. I pull a reckless j-turn into the street, ramming through a curb and into a man on a Sunday stroll. Tough luck. This bumbling four-cylinder drives



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into a nice little square, I laugh off the idea of walking back to my digs. Instead I walk into traffic and relieve some sucker of his ride and steal home."

THE SCRIPT

GTA3's storyline is enough to keep you on the edge of your couch for a week. After that, maybe you'll have conquered the game's first chapter. The storyline is all set up in the game's opening cinema. Here's the short of it:

Your crook team decides to bust open the Liberty City bank vault and score bags of fast cash. But in the first of a skyscraper full of plot twists, Catalina (your girlfriend/partner-in-crime) decides you're small potatoes. To avoid confusion, she tells you to your face. Next things next, in a finger-snap of time, you're flat on your back courtesy of a surprising knockout blow from her rifle butt. There you are, staring up at the stars wondering how this happened to you. The police come with cuffs, pin the entire robbery on you, and you're on your way to the long-term lock-up.

Lucky for you, the ride to "the country" doesn't go as planned. It seems the balance of luck evens out and you just happen to be part of a prison shipment that includes a crotchety old man who's valued by a group of loudmouthed hijackers.

These masked marauders bust out the blue hair, and leave you free to roam. Next, you're on the run with your new mate, 8-Ball, plowing full steam ahead into a new life of crime with the sketchiest of players in video game cinema. So begins your immersion into Rockstar's sadist metropolis, its assortment of debauched tasks, and the cityscape where you'll exact your revenge.

The key design philosophy for this game is free-

6

like a tractor. I'm getting hammered left and right, and once the trunk pops like a champagne cork, the rearview shows me a dead hand dangling, then waving with each impact. I'm sweating more bullets than they're shooting when I spy a cop turning the corner. I nearly yank my shoulder out of the socket, tugging the hand-brake, which sends me into a cartoon spin. The Forelli brothers don't react in time, and race right into the teeth of the five-o. I shake and bake through a wave of afternoon traffic until finally, finally, I find a friendly alley to lie low in. After a wait, I cruise to the car crusher on the edge of town without incident. Once the car's dropped off and squeezed



8

dom—to do anything at any time, with the easiest controls imaginable, so the player is immersed in the world," Houser tells us. "It's not just the range of things the player can do [run, walk, sprint, shoot, fight, drive any vehicle, speak to any NPC, etc.], it's the seamless movement between these acts and the fact that the game world does things to you that is so progressive. The quality of the production values brings that game world to life."

As for the missions that keep the story trolleying along, get ready for much more than a day's work. You'll have to snake through 80 missions to "win." Or is "successfully exact revenge" a more fitting phrase? We've heard whispers that there are over 100 hours of gameplay, but to clarify we went to the source, asking how long GTA3 would take to finish.

"No idea. The game doesn't necessarily ever end," says Houser, proudly. "It's a huge game with enormous amounts of structured gameplay, as well as all of the unstructured havoc and exploration that happens around you. I feel sorry for the people writing the strategy guide. No two people play the game, or experience Liberty City, in the same way."

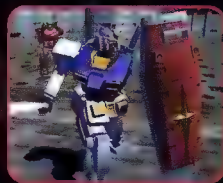
Enormous means an understatement. Along with duties handed out by resident mobsters, there are scores of side missions you don't even have to do to get through the meat of the game. If you're short on time but still want a GTA3 high without all the storyline, it's been taken care of. Jack the negligent police car and engage in an assortment of "vigilante" missions where you'll be gunning to kill off a key witness in classic chase-and-destroy fashion. The clock is ticking, so take them down before they squeal. If that's too high-pressure, jerk a working man from his office by swiping a yellow cab. Then enjoy a smat-

Kick Some Rusty Metal Butt!

PlayStation 2

MOBILE SUIT **GUNDAM** JOURNEY TO JABURO™

Marvel at the detailed battlefield scenes and mobile suits with breathtaking digital graphics as seen in the movies! Experience firsthand the thrill of guiding your allies in their mission to conquer the enemy in mobile suit warfare. Relive scenes from the TV series or implement your own battle strategies to create whole new story lines.



Animated Violence

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grand theft auto III

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tering of Rockstar-style Crazy Taxi. Pick up fares, drop them off, and earn some cash on the side. Drive too wildly, the fares will bail. But, if they don't pay, you can always exit the car and beat them down with a few hearty knuckle sandwiches. If you're tired of being a lawless gangster, head to the hospital and pilfer the nearest ambulance or swindle a firetruck and become a civil servant. Otherwise, you can always answer one of the two ringing payphones to get offered missions with as much flavor and intrigue as your ultimate goal to eliminate that broad who screwed you over.

On a whim I answer a ringing payphone in the park. Joey's garage is closed until morning, Luigi's busy handling his gaggle of girls, and after two weeks on the streets I'm too high strung to miss an opportunity. It's El Burro, who I only know by voice. I, too, know he's the leader of the Diablos, a Mexican gang that patrols a dark corner of the city. He asks me to do him a solid, says that the Triads, a rival gang, insulted

MISSION: I SCREAM, YOU SCREAM

Word on the street travels lightning fast. So when the payphone stationed in the center of Liberty City starts ringing, it's no surprise that it's El Burro, the leader of the Diablos. Seems he's heard your name bandied about the streets and offers you a healthy stack of bills in return for protection. Apparently, a local gang of no-goods has threatened to extract El Burro's, how do we say?, family jewels. So, for obvious reasons, he wants them killed. Since he knows they have a ridiculous affection for ice cream he has you pick up a bomb-filled briefcase in Harwood, rip off an ice-cream truck, park the truck at the docks where the bad guys hang, turn on the jingle-jangly ice-cream tune, and stand far away with detonator in hand so you can make them all go up in smoke.



"I'm not personally interested in Pokémon, nor do I think a large section of the adult population is. So should there be no games which reflect the world, as it is portrayed in the cultural media?" - Sam Houser, Rockstar President

10

him by trashing his car. He wants payback. Why not? I've got time. So within a game hour I'm standing in the middle of the Triad hood, flamethrower blazing, lighting them up like Roman candles. After I leave 30 Triads and a few boy-scout cops crisper than over-broiled steak, I'm back at my hideout, counting a stack of fresh dollars.

COURTING CONTROVERSY?

GTA3 is going to stir up a scourge of controversy. We won't pretend otherwise. At first glance it's a game that plays like a gangster film, founded on freedom. You play a bad guy in a bad world. Sure. Fine. No worries. But when people discover what the freedom within the game allows and what the in-game gangster lifestyle excuses, concern will annoyingly rise like a tsunami. Some might pontificate that Rockstar is making the game controversial as a stunt to drive sales. But that's because "they" haven't played it.

I think the controversy, if it comes, will not come from gamers, or the gaming industry," says the soft-spoken Terry Donovan, Rockstar's COO and VP of Marketing. "As such, you always have to question its relevance to the quality of the game. We hope

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that journalistic integrity will win out and the cultural magnitude of the game will be the focus of any press that it garners, but maybe that's just unrealistic."

This freedom is inarguably "cool" to gamers who often feel constricted within an average game's confines, or, if not constricted, then bored. But less game-savvy media might balk. After all, games are for kids, right?

"I think the only people who think all games should be available to children are children themselves," says Donovan. "I certainly did when I was a kid. Now, I think differently."

"Does anyone seriously think [games are only for kids]?" muses an animated Houser. "These are people I find scary, wanting to tell other people what to read or watch. Not everything is suitable for everyone. There has to be a choice, and there have to be things which are of more interest to adults than children. I'm not personally interested in Pokémon, nor do I think a large section of the adult population is. So should there be no games which reflect the world, as it is portrayed in the cultural media? This game is not for children."



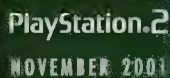
UNTAME THE BEAST WITHIN

Water ski.

Surf.

Power-slide.

Get untamed.



grand theft auto III



LIBERTY CITY'S SECRET SPOTS

Along with the billion hours of gameplay that go with GTA3, there's even more to do on the side. You can 1.) find 100 hidden packages spread around all three worlds (remember this is just one-third of Liberty City that we're showing) for a juicy surprise at the end. Also, you can 2.) find specially placed ramps to try for Insane Stunt bonuses. The higher you fly, the bigger the reward. Does the GTA3 fun ever end?

▶ NOW PLAYING



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"We made the game for older gamers," Donovan stresses. "And that's who we would like to play it." So it all comes down to the mature rating that is as much a part of this game's identity as the art style. Particularly in this testy time of game-violence backlash. But with the game labeled with a big fat M, Rockstar can literally get away with murder in GTA3, as well they should. If the types of things that appeared in this game were splashed on the silver screen with an R rating, no one would bother taking a deep breath to protest. But games are a different story. For now.

These battles for creative freedom have been fought in all preceding mediums: books, film, music and so on. Now it's being fought in [video games], says Houser. "I'd rather not be involved, personally. We have, I believe, the right to do what we want, as long as we don't market it to children. Some games are not to everyone's tastes. This game won't be."

One of the biggest concerns for Rockstar, as pioneers of the M-rated charge, has to be that the game might be taken less seriously because people will

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focus on the violence within. We know GTA3 is a credible virtual experience like no other, because we've been playing it *nonstop*. But is there a concern that others will pass it off as a series of glitteringly well-pieced-together sequences done for shock value?

"We feel that the game is not gratuitous, nor, obviously, is it realistic. But it is funny," Houser tells us. "We wanted the game to have the feel of a Tarantino movie, rather than anything 'serious.' The violence is taken seriously by people who haven't played the game. I do think that playing GTA3 is an immersive experience, but in no way a realistic one. It just doesn't look, sound or feel realistic. It's all supposed to be funny, but obviously describing it in black and white, rather than actually playing the game, can make for an easy 'shock' story."

"Funny." That's one word that continues to resonate while chatting up the Rockstar brain trust. And the game is funny. So, what's laughable about running over diving-for-their-life pedestrians? Or popping someone's top from long range with a sniper rifle? Plenty. Once you've played the game, it's



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remarkably comedic. And it is shocking. Maybe you'll start the game with ideas of sainthood holding you back. You'll drive carefully, to avoid a jaywalker blood-bath, but after awhile, it's simply too easy to maul the world's also-rans into the pavement, particularly when staring down the barrel of a timed mission.

There's something important to consider here. The glue that holds this game together, that makes the shock of the violence obsolete in the gristmill of social commentary, is that it's a remarkable gaming experience. The clearest pop parallel to draw is matching up GTA3 and *The Sopranos*. With HBO's runaway hit the use of violence is condoned by usually rankled media-types because the story is so solid. So, too, we expect the violent aspects of GTA3 to be overlooked after the initial shock fades.

"This has always been the case with this naughty game about car jacking. However, [the controversy] has never really helped sales," says Donovan. "The first Grand Theft Auto sold over an incredibly long period of time, because people loved the

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freemove gameplay. We never got any spike in sales thanks to a news story. So it isn't really helpful to us. It's quite boring, considering the effort that went into making the game as a whole. It's always disappointing when one small feature is focused on at the expense of others."

TRUE MAFIOBO

Authenticity is essential to creating and re-creating the Mafia experience. GTA3 is executed so crisply, it'll keep you wanting more and more and more. The fantastic use of cinematography is a real achievement, and reinforces the use of some of the most recognizable voices from the pantheon of pop-gangster lore.

"We wanted to bring this weird world to life and the acting had to be spot-on for this to work," says Houser. "These guys are famous, or well-known, because they are incredibly talented. With short scenes, they brought the characters to life. I think it adds authenticity and supports the action in a brilliant way. The cutscenes are both instruction and

MISSION:
TRIADS AND TRIBULATIONS

TONI CIPRIANI LEFT A NOTE: "THE LAUNDRY STILL OWES US MONEY, BUT NOW THEY FIGURE THEY'RE GETTING PROTECTION FROM THE TRIADS..."

"...THEY'RE USING A FISH MARKET IN CHINATOWN AS A FRONT. SHOW THEM WHAT PROTECTION IS..."

FUGEDDABOUTIT!

CAN'T DRIVE INTO THE HEART OF CHINATOWN, SO IMPROVISE. HAVE TO PUT THE X ON THIS WARLORD ON FOOT. NO PROBLEM. JUST DUST OFF THE SHOTGUN.

"...WHACK THE TRIAD WARLORDS, AND WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, TAKE OUT SOME OF THEIR SOLDIERS, TOO."

ONE TRIAD DOWN. TWO TO GO.

WITH ANOTHER WARLORD PUSHING UP DAISIES, THOSE TRIADS ARE GUN-BLAZIN' MAD.

CAN'T GET INTO THE FISH FACTORY UNLESS YOU'RE DRIVING A TRIAD TRUCK. CAPISCE?

DIE FARGIN' ICEHOLE. DIE!

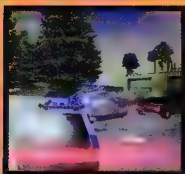
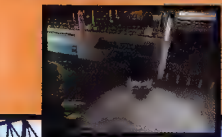
LAYING THE THIRD WARLORD DOWN FOR A DIRT NAP IS BEST DONE ON THE RUN. ENTER: THE UZI.

THE WARLORDS ARE DOORNAIL DEAD, BUT THE SOLDIERS STILL HAVE AMMO TO OUTFR.

grand theft auto III

MISSION: CHAPERONE

Don Salvatore Leone wants you to take care of his girl for the night. You agree, of course. It's her idea to head to the docks for a dose of Spank, the city's hottest drug. Then her dealer directs her to a fresh party on the edge of town, and you're driving. Seems like a fine idea for this wild-child dame. That is, until the police raid the party and you have to drive helter-skelter to get her home safe.



16

17

reward. They help immerse the player in this world."

For instance, your first true mission is handed out by that sleazy strip-club owner named Luigi, whose voice is instantly recognizable. If you're a *Sopranos* fan, you'll notice it right away. If you've seen *The Matrix* or *Memento*, you'll rack your brain to put a face and name to the vocals. We'll save you some

We are a culture fascinated by the Mafia. So, why are we so drawn to it? Is it the constant threat of waking up with a cleaved horse head beneath our blankets? Or the chance to eat top-shelf gnocchi at every meal?

"That's a real old question. But you know, everybody likes the easy life," says Vincent. "Everybody

"Everybody likes the shiny cars, the fast girls and the money and all the stuff that comes with the easy life. That's what people relate to." — Frank Vincent, actor

time: It's Joey Pantoliano.

Within an hour Luigi will have you bring his top girl/prostitute Misty over to Joey's garage. That voice, too, will keep the tip of your tongue active, until you realize it's Michael Rapaport from *Cop Land* and *Beautiful Girls*. Keep working your way through the ranks and you'll discover Toni Cipriani, voiced by the imitable Michael Madsen who appeared in *Donnie Brasco* and played the venomous Mr. Blonde in *Reservoir Dogs*. And at the head of any honest-to-goodness crime family is a Don. In this case it's Salvatore Leone, voiced by the easy to recognize Frank Vincent from *Casino* and *Goodfellas*.

Were these Hollywood players difficult to coerce into a gaming environment?

"Why? I mean I don't understand why people think it would be difficult to be convinced," actor Frank Vincent tells us. "I am a film actor, but the idea of doing a character without my face is interesting. So it wasn't difficult to convince me at all. Rockstar sent me the script and we talked about it. I was happy to do it because of the content of the material. Plus, the price was right."

likes the shiny cars, the fast girls and the money and all the stuff that comes with the easy life. These guys make money and do what they do, and are glamour figures. That's what people relate to."

Since launch, the PS2 has had Rockstar as their darling *consigliere*. But only now is the time ripe for GTA3 to pull off the biggest heist yet. Think the game is controversial, think it's too violent, think it's a stunt? Get over yourself. In October, when the game releases, give it a shot. You'll be helpless to its charms.

"In terms of content, I hope it's taken as proof that adults play games, and want games about the same subject matters as the movies they watch, the books they read, and so on. When gamers get their hands on Grand Theft Auto 3, we hope they'll use it as a benchmark for depth, scope and production value."

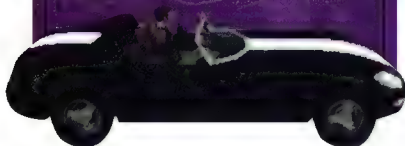
Like any great gangster film, Grand Theft Auto 3 will take you to a place you would never want to go, even with your doors locked and your windows rolled up. But once you're there, once you're standing within its confines, Liberty City's hard heartbeat pounding around you, you'll never want to leave.

▶ NOW PLAYING



Pick up a hip ride and you'll likely be listening to Game Radio, featuring some of these tracks:

- ▶ "Scary Movies" (Instrumental) by Reef
- ▶ "We're Live [Danger]" by Royce Da 5'9"
- ▶ "Nature Freestyle" by Nature
- ▶ "By A Stranger" by Black Rob





Love At First Fight.



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Violence
Suggestive Themes

CAPCOM

PlayStation 2



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In the world, only this island is...

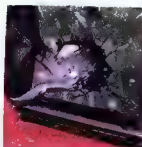


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MARCECKO FOOTWEAR





Arctic Thunder



Casper



Arctic Thunder



Casper

Arctic Thunder

Publisher Midway
Developer Inland Productions
Web Site www.midway.com
 In order to give you a better idea what it's like to play Arctic Thunder on the PS2, I've decided to write the rest of this review in a manner that mimics the game's frame rate.

Basically,
 this
 is
 the choppiest,
 most inexcusably
 disappointed
 framerate
 ever on the PS2,
 rendering
 this
 game
 virtually
 unplayable
 Don't
 go
 anywhere
 near
 it.

Final Score ●
Sam Kennedy



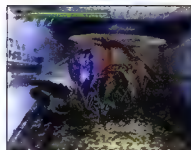
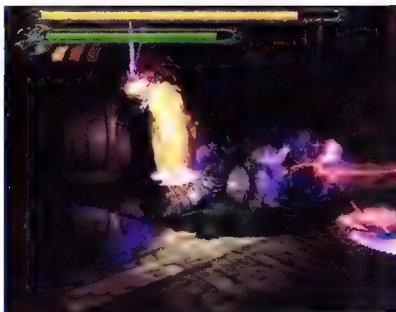
Casper: Spirit Dimensions

Publisher TDK Mediactive
Developer Lucky Chicken
Web Site www.tdk-med.com
 There are a lot of things to like about Casper. For one thing, the game is really beautiful. From the moment you start, floating in front of this creepy-looking house, it's clear that this is going to be an above average-looking game. Even with the limited draw distances in some areas, the game looks nice, especially in the surprisingly detailed character designs.

And it's also nice that Casper actually flies, unlike the last Casper game for the PS one. And even though he doesn't have quite the mobility you'd expect from an excorporeal being—he can't pass through solid objects, for example, and there's a limit to how high he can fly—the ability to phase through gratings and such is neat.

But here's the problem. The game is hard. That would be fine if the license were something older players might be interested in, but it really isn't. And it's not just the game difficulty issue; the FPS-style controls (think TimeSplitters or Red Faction) just don't work that well for a game with full 3D movement. It makes it hard just to move. And that says a lot coming from me, a staunch defender—and longtime veteran—of that control scheme. But when the game is basically one giant scavenger hunt, it's just not worth the effort.

Final Score ●●●
Joe Rybicki



Devil May Cry

Just plain cool

Publisher Capcom
Developer Capcom
Web Site www.capcom.com
 Someone asked me the other day to sum up Devil May Cry in a word. I hesitated for a moment, trying hard to avoid saying the monstrously overused word that immediately came to mind. So I thought of other ones instead: Splendid? Amazing?



Beautiful? Extraordinary? They certainly all fit. But in the end, I just had to blurt out the one I had so carefully avoided: "Cool." There's just no getting around it. Devil May Cry defines the word. And it does so more than any other video game to come along. Ever.

With the exception of a rather throwaway plot, absolutely no part of Devil May Cry escapes the realm of coolness superior. And it all starts with the game's hero, Dante. As the single best new Capcom character to come along since Mega Man, Dante represents the very personification of cool. He wears a long red coat. He shoots guns and slices with a blade interchangeably. He says lines like, "Flock off, feather face!" [OK, so maybe dialogue isn't his forte.] He's a superhero for the 21st century, whom I fully expect to see blasting away at the undead for years to come.

That is, if you're still not getting your kicks from the sheer sold and enjoyable, yet tremendously challenging gameplay. Gameplay that's, well, just plain cool.

Don't be fooled by the lineage of Devil May Cry. Though created by Shinji Mikami and his Resident Evil team—maybe even looking a bit like the venerable survival-horror series itself in screenshots—Dante's quest against the demon Mundus is all about action, action, action. And a little more action, on top of that. It's obvious the developers had this in mind: "Screw finding ammo. We'll make it unlimited. Down with running away from encounters with the undead. We'll make you actually want to seek such skirmishes." And man, do they ever succeed.

When engaged with an enemy—whether equipped with a sword or a strength-enhancing gauntlet that tests your martial-arts skills—you are there. Every swing, every karate chop, every hit you take causes a

pure rush of adrenaline, as you do your best to ensure that you live to pick up the red crystals left by slain enemies (which in turn allow you to stock up on power-ups, learn new fighting moves or open certain doors). And it gets even better when your demon half kicks in, allowing you to kick things into high butt-kicking gear (see sidebar for more). Even though a sometimes-faulty camera leads to your occasionally unfair death, just beating everything around you to a pulp leads to that feeling only the very finest games can truly achieve—pure, unadulterated fun.

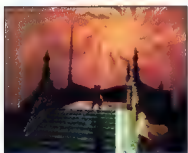
But that doesn't mean that the fun comes easy. Nuh-uh. In your way stands an amazing variety of foes, ranging from demons embodied by man-sized puppets and wraiths that attack with huge scissors, to huge bugs, to lizard men and energy beings. As if these teams of evil dudes weren't enough to end your Devil Hunting days—and



After Dante has sliced up, punched away at and/or shot back to hell enough demonic foes, his Devil Hunter meter charges up to a point where his already superheroic abilities become, well, super-superheroic. With the sword Alastor equipped, he can fly and attack from afar with lightning. Meanwhile, the gauntlet III's power allows for some unbelievable fire attacks.



they certainly are—it's the slew of boss battles that you'll remember the most. Whether they come in the form of an electricity-happy giant griffon, a huge blob of evil, a spider the size of my apartment or Mundus himself, I'm betting you'll never defeat any of them on your first try. God knows I didn't. In some cases, **I think I might have faced**



ing. Against Nelo Angelo and several other bosses, my heart pounded within my chest as if I had just endured a couple sessions of Dance Dance Revolution. I'm not sure that a PS2 game has ever made me feel so involved.

I'm also not sure that a PS2 game has ever looked this *good*. Though given a serious run for its money by recently released and upcoming PS2 titles like *Ico* and *Metal Gear Solid 2*, it's my opinion that *Devil May Cry's* beautiful scenery and amazing particle effects you just have to see the shadow monster [he] have set the benchmark for what games on Sony's wondersystem can look like. Trust me when I say that any still-frame screenshot represents this game about as well as Lionel Hutz represents the Simpsons. Throw in a half-Gothic, half-metal soundtrack, and the **aesthetics alone compensate for the generic, highly derivative story** completely devoid of believable character development.

And the fact that one of these characters just happens to be Dante doesn't hurt, either. He's a cool hero in a cool adventure featuring cool enemies, cool gameplay, and cool graphics and sound.

Cool, hun?

Final Score ● ● ● ● ●

Chris Baker

Players: 1
Memory Card: 416 KB



Dave Mirra
Freestyle BMX 2

Publisher Acclaim
Developer Z-axis
Web Site www.acclaim.com

The power of the PS2 has finally come, and without being too far from the starting line, that power has already found a way to bite me in the ass. I've discovered that Dave Mirra 2 has some sharp corners. In effect, what's happened is that this game features **crazily huge environments**. Each level is an Epicenter of vastness. This sounds like the be-all, end-all of gaming, right? Finally, a game that's as respectable real life as it is virtual. But, in fact, when you're trying to find randomly placed items scattered to the four winds—something you have to do if you want to beat the game—that space becomes a nightmare. It's enough frustration to really hurt the score.

Sure, the environments are great when you're trying to score a bike factory worth of points, because you can work your way around and keep the trick lines fresh. But scoring points is such a ridiculously minimal part of the game that it's hardly worth mentioning. So I'll stop mentioning it

I don't want to sound like an old maid, because there is plenty of good news when it comes to the PS2's only blemish experience. For instance, the best news for Mirra PS one die-hards is that **the control issues I've been griping about since the original came out have been remedied.** And, wisely, the makers of Mirra have kept in the modifier, ensuring that you can do about a million and one tricks if you've got the time [you'll certainly

have the environment space).

Also, the game is fast (though sometimes too fast) and there's a lot, a lot, a lot of things to accomplish to beat the entire game, which makes for depth. Forget renting this one, unless you don't plan on getting past the first level.

Gripes. **the multiplayer isn't split-screen; you'll have to alternate.** There's some seriously bad collision detection at times, so you might be able to ride right through a box and not be knocked down. Which seems wrong in some way

Basically, Mirra is a strong game with some strong faults. But I suggest giving it a whirl.

Final Score ●●●●
Todd Zuniga





Formula One 2001

Publisher Sony CEA
Developer Sony CEE
Web Site www.scea.com

Why can't anyone get F1 racing right anymore? Bizarre Creations managed to do a spectacular job—twice—for Psynopsis, and yet no one since seems to be able to recreate that magic. Not even this, which is presumably the most recent successor in the same line.

So what's wrong with this one? Well, the same as pretty much every other F1 game since 1998. In an attempt to popularize the sport globally or something, **the handling and difficulty levels are completely screwed up** On the game's default settings you are able to perform superhuman displays of endurance and control as you can pull from 22nd (last) place in the pack, all the way up to pole in about 10 laps. There's also a tendency for the AI to think you're playing Destruction Derby.

Crank the difficulty levels up to try to compensate for all this weirdness and **everything just goes crazy**. ABS braking and other helpful assistants are immediately switched off and you're left with an uncontrollable, hypersensitive car that spins off the track if you so much as breathe on the joystick.

Compared with EA Sports' F1 atrocity, this is slightly better. If you throw all hopes of Formula One simulation out the window, you can learn to tolerate the game's quirks. If you feel you must.

Final Score ●●●
John Davison

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 78 KB



But enough about us...

What do you think?

Do you think we were way

off on one of our reviews

this month? Do you feel like

you noticed elements of the

game that we missed? Well,

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will be noted but not consid-

ered for print. So there.

Gadget Racers

Publisher Conspiracy

Developer Takara

Web Site conspiracygames.com

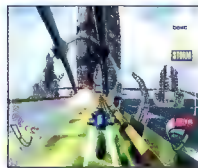
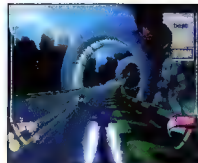
What a pleasant surprise. Out of nowhere comes this cute, quirky racer, and it actually ends up being solidly entertaining. Will wonders never cease.

Actually, I almost hesitate to call Gadget Racers a racing game. I mean, of course the immediate goal of the game is to win races, and to do that you need a modicum of driving skill. But dig into the game a little and you'll see that the real point seems to be more of a race to outfit your vehicle from a staggering range of choices. It feels to me like a kind of *Pokémon* on wheels: Not only is there an enormous variety of body types [all superdeformed in a corny cartoon style], but there's a vast assortment of attachments. Some of these are designed to aid performance: propellers, for example, help you drive underwater! better; or you can get a set of wings that will allow your car to glide over jumps and the like. But other attachments are purely for show: taxi lights, novelty horns, etc. It all makes for an astonishing depth, something you wouldn't expect when first observing the cutesy nature of the game.

There are some control issues in the actual racing engine, and some poorly designed tracks, but all in all this makes for a surprisingly solid game for racing fans.

Final Score ●●●●

Joe Rybicki



Extreme G III

Ready for an all-new addiction to speed?

Publisher Acclaim

Developer Acclaim Cheltenham

Web Site www.acclaim.com

For those of you who've been waiting patiently for WipeOut Fusion, wait no longer. Here's your alternative. With Sony's racer not even on the U.S. radar yet, here's a game that perfectly fills the void. In fact, Extreme G III holds its own so well that you might not even think about WipeOut Fusion after you give this a go. Just boot up, hold on tight, and enjoy the incredible roller-coaster ride.

You've never before experienced speed like this in a game. I guarantee it. The effect of racing at breakneck speeds is accomplished better than in any game before this; it's absolutely stunning. And once you upgrade to one of the larger engines and break the sound barrier, things get even better—the screen blurs, the music fades, and all you're left with is pure speed and the whirring of your engine in the background. It'll give you a feeling rarely found in video games—and it's one you must experience firsthand to understand.

The reason speed is accom-

plished so well in XGIII, though, is due to Acclaim Cheltenham's amazing graphics engine and track design. The graphics, though not spectacularly detailed, are often filled with all sorts of lighting and special effects that give the game an almost rendered look at times (in the rain especially). And the tracks were clearly created with the intention of getting you sick. They twist, turn, bring you way up into the air and then straight down. You really do feel like you're on the most insane roller coaster of your life.

My only real complaint with XGIII, though, is that while it fea-

tures some of the best presentation around, the game has already been done to death. At times it really does feel just like WipeOut on bikes. And unfortunately, the weapons available aren't interesting enough to make things feel that fresh.

But to be honest, I don't really care if it doesn't feel that new. It's one of the most amazing racing experiences I've had in a long time and that's all that really matters.

Final Score ●●●●

Sam Kennedy



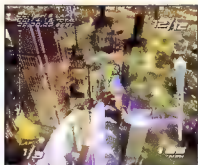
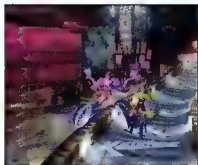
Extreme G III



Graphics	The sense of speed is incredible and the special effects are simply awe-inspiring.
Track Design	Incredible tracks make you feel just like you're on a roller-coaster ride from hell.
Music/Sound	The music fading out to just the whir of the bikes is too cool.
Gameplay	It's pretty straightforward stuff, really. Race, shoot, charge up your craft.
Sex Appeal	There's a cute chick on the box, but that's about it.
Downsides	Weapons are a tad on the lame side. AI isn't all that hot.
Overall	Topnotch presentation, but the whole thing lacks a bit of substance.

Acclaim's XGIII ad states that it's what's between the legs that counts.





Kinetica

Futuristic, edge-of-your-seat racing like you've never seen

Publisher Sony CEA

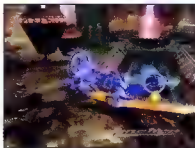
Developer Sony Santa Monica

Web Site www.scea.com

Drawing inspiration from such games as Tony Hawk and especially SSX, Kinetica adds a whole new dynamic to the futuristic racing genre: stunts. Because of this, Kinetica feels like a completely fresh experience with lots of new gameplay mechanics to master. And it helps exemplify even further why even good games like Extreme G III are starting to feel just a tad bit tired.

Developed by Sony's Santa Monica studio (including some of the same folks who worked on

Twisted Metal: Black), Kinetica has an overall feeling of quality about it (just like TMB). Menus are sleek, the graphics are incredible, the techno soundtrack kicks—the overall experience is just so well-presented that it feels like something only possible on the PS2



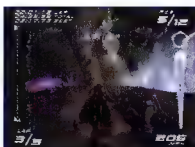
Which is why when you toss in the truly addictive gameplay, it becomes easy to see why this is another winner for Sony. While SCEA has been waiting for SCE to get its act together with WipeOut Fusion, the company has come up with a game that's quite possibly even better.

Kinetica's stunts, like in SSX, build up your turbo meter and are rather easy to pull off—which is a good thing, mind you. Because with all of the insane action going on, things can get pretty crazy. But that's the best part. Kinetica, if you give it enough time, will offer some of the best adrenaline rushes you've ever experienced. You're required to pull off stunts and perfectly mix in boosts at all times during the races, and it keeps you on the edge of your seat the entire way through. It's an amazing rush.

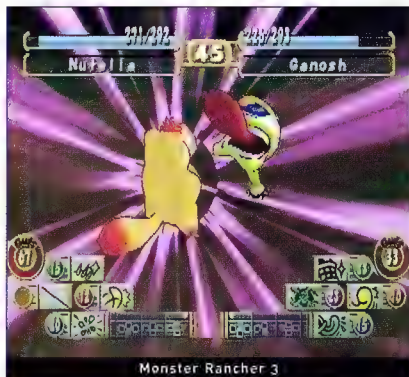
Like SSX, Kinetica is one of those hybrid racing/stunt games that just offers so much fun and depth. You may not see it at first, but give it time and you'll believe.

Final Score ●●●●●
Sam Kennedy

E Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 76 Kb



Sony's ad, on the other hand, asks how fast you like your women.



Monster Rancher 3

Publisher Tecmo

Developer Tecmo

Web Site www.tecmoinc.com

Maybe it's a little unfair on my part, but I keep waiting to hit that wall.

No, I'm not talking about a fierce battle with a Monol, those imposing, wall-like monsters. Tell you the truth, I'm not sure Monols are even in MR3, as I've yet to encounter one.

I've been a fan of the Monster Rancher series since the beginning. The first title, released in 1997, picked up on that whole creature spawning/training/battling craze, throwing in the option to generate critters from any CD in your collection. (MR3 also lets you use DVDs.)

I've always liked the character design, the storybook tone of the dialogue (although there's not much actual story there) and the whimsical gameplay. But as much as I enjoyed them, I found that with both PS one editions I'd hit that "wall" of boredom after about a dozen hours. The passive nature of the training modes and the limited battles just got tiresome after a while.

So now I'm playing Monster Rancher 3, anxiously awaiting that dreaded moment. But it's not happening. In fact, I can't stop playing the game. I'm hopelessly addicted. Heck, I've been so wrapped up in developing my handful of monsters that I haven't even begun to scour my CD and DVD collections in search of elusive, rare creatures.

Funny thing is, MR3 isn't all that different from its predecessors. Its main upgrade is the most obvious one: the graphics. But, oh, what an upgrade it is! I simply adore MR3's cartoony, cel-shaded scoundrels. Finally, these guys have all the per-

sonality they deserve. Call me shallow, but now that these monsters look so good, I can't help but care about them—so much so that I was completely devastated when my first, and still favorite, monster passed away. And it doesn't hurt that I can import pics of myself into the game, which then appear on masks for my little fellows to wear.

Of course, MR3 isn't for everyone—especially since the gameplay is essentially unchanged since the last release. If you hunger for quick action or a sweeping storyline, look elsewhere. But if you can dig these kinds of wacky, slow-paced games, then you're in for a real treat.

Final Score ●●●●●
Gary Steinman

E Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 267 Kb



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TO
REALITY



DOWNLOADING

MATURE



Animated Blood
Animated Violence



EIDOS

ENTERTAINMENT
GAMES WITH CHARACTER

PlayStation 2

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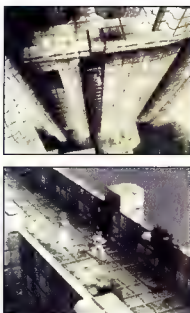


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Ico

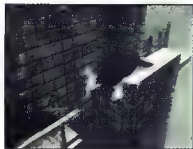
A quiet revolution

Publisher Sony CEA

Developer Sony CEI

Web Site www.scea.com

"Silence speaks louder than words." Seldom has a game more clearly exemplified this maxim than Ico. While playing this masterpiece, you grow to realize just how much can be communicated through atmosphere, wordless gestures and facial expressions. You start to pay attention to things that in the course of everyday life might get lost in the hubbub of conversation. You notice the power of sound effects—footsteps, crackling flames, the lonely sound of the wind—and the mood that careful lighting can create. **It's hard to express how stunning this game looks and sounds;** from architecture to animation, Ico continues to



astound at every turn.

But the game isn't only about setting a scene, although that's certainly one of the major draws. **It's also about forming a bond with the player,** to an extent few games can even dream of. By a deft use of character design, animation and control, the game causes the player to quickly identify with young Ico and his fragile companion Yorda. When Ico grabs Yorda's hand and

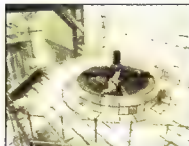
nearly pulls her off her feet in his urgency, it makes us laugh. When he holds out his hand and she prepares to make a death-defying leap into his arms, we're on the edge of our seats. And when she's grabbed by the smoke monsters and spirited away, our hearts are in our throats.

But Ico isn't only about character interaction, either. It's also about brain games; at it's most basic, it's a puzzle game, after all. What's great about Ico's puzzles, though, is that they're so well-integrated into the game. **Rare is the puzzle that seems out of place,** most make perfect sense within the context of the game. Of course, there are a few notable exceptions, and plenty of places where you might wonder just what the original purpose of all this machinery was. But never do

you feel that jarring disconnect that so bothers critics of games like Myst—you won't find yourself pulled out of the game by a sudden color-matching puzzle or a complex series of gears and levers with no discernable purpose.

Of course, these puzzles come at a price. Since the main goal of each area is to get Yorda out of that area, the game basically consists of one long environment challenge after another. This has three effects: One is that those with less experience in video game puzzle convention might find themselves easily stumped. [There are plenty of opportunities, that's for sure.] Another problem is that because of the complexity of each area, **the game isn't all that long.** That is, if you factor out the time spent running all the possible solutions through your head, the game just doesn't take very long to complete [and there are no rewards for playing through multiple times]. Once I knew what I was doing, for example, I was able to blast through in a little over three hours. Now, I want to be clear that my first time through the game took probably three or four times that long. But regardless, this structure can seriously meddle with the pacing of the

game, and **there's really nothing more frustrating than running around the same area for hours because you just can't figure out what you need to do to get out.** The



third problem has to do with action. There just isn't enough of it. While you do have the occasional run-in with the smoke monsters, these are somewhat infrequent. Plus, while interesting the first few times, after awhile they start to feel a bit tacked-on; where the puzzles are mostly seamlessly integrated into the game, **the battles tend to feel sort of pointless**—inserted more for variety than for story.

But if these complaints seem unnecessarily nitpicky, that's probably because there isn't a whole lot to complain about. The strengths of this masterfully crafted title far outweigh its weaknesses. It's a revolutionary game design, a perfect showcase for the system, and a must-have for anyone's library—but more importantly, it's simply a beautiful, challenging, enthralling game. What else matters?

Final Score ●●●●●

Joe Rybicki

Players: 1
Memory Card: 345 KB

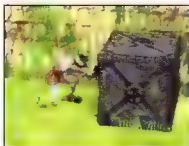
BLIND DEVOTION

Recently, there's been some talk among folks who have played the Ico demo [see this month's Input for one example] that the reason Yorda has so much trouble fending for herself is that she's blind. Now, while I think it's great that people are getting so wrapped up in the game that they're dissecting it to this extent, I'd like to take this opportunity to point out two items that will hopefully put this rumor to rest.

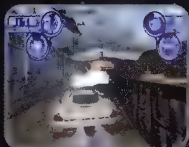
Consider: On frequent occasions Yorda very clearly looks around at her surround-

ings, watching enemies and occasionally Ico himself; a blind person will not look from side to side in the manner she does when first stepping out of her cape. And the other thing is that there are dozens of areas in the game in which Ico simply puts out his hand without making a sound and Yorda jumps either straight up or across a chasm, catching his hand every time.

If nothing else, though, this debate is an excellent example of how this game can draw the player in while barely saying a word. Bravo.



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PlayStation 2



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NFL QB Club 2002



NFL QB Club 2002

NFL Quarterback Club 2002

Publisher Acclaim Studios

Developer Acclaim Studios

Web Site www.acclaim.com

I like free enterprise and the spirit of American idealism. After all, competition breeds better video game football, right? Well, not in the bland QB Club 2002's case.

If you've played recent QB Clubs you'll find that this is quite an engaging improvement. But playing QB Club on the Dreamcast was like filing your fingernails with a chalkboard. Really, the only thing that makes this PS2 incarnation fun is the Quarterback Challenge. It's the same kind of event you'd see on an idle off-season Saturday, in which your favorite QBs would ham it up, competing against one another while wearing Oakleys, athletic shorts and backward hats. And one of them ends up with a big, goofy check that's pretty much pocket change if they win. This part of the game is fun, entertaining and perfect for a party. The football, though, is where the problems begin.

The rest of the game isn't awful, but it isn't rewarding either. Try running the ball with any of the top running backs in the game and you'll never need to throw a pass. There's no momentum by the players, so you can cut and juke with a running back without having to worry about spraining an ankle.

Overall, this one's too easy. And why wouldn't you just buy Madden?

Final Score ●●●

Todd Zuniga



NHL 2002

NHL 2002

Publisher EA Sports

Developer EA Canada

Web Site www.easports.com

If you're a fan of EA's NHL series, or if you used to be, and if you've relocated your vid-haunts or dug up your gaming rigs, prepare for a bloated long-distance bill. Reason being: You'll want to call all your old hockey-gaming buddies.

Because, finally, finally, finally, we have a hockey game that returns to those cherished times, those legendary all-nighters, borne from Sega Genesis' NHL '95.

I've come to believe, after many hours spent in quiet contemplation, that the Sega NHL series had gone the way of the Star Wars franchise. My disappointments in the last few years had convinced me that no sequel, even with fantastic technological advancements, could make me feel the way the originals of each series did. PS one puck left me heart sick, PS2 left me yawning. The Luddite in me told the rest of my brain that technology was the cause. Too much pizzazz. Too much rignarole. Both me and my *Synonym Finder* were searching for simplicity.

Now, using the something-old, something-new formula, less-than-ecstatic vid-hockey fans have been stitched a brilliant quilt to warm our spirits. It's fun. It's fast. And though it's not perfect, it's the only hockey must-buy I've seen in the last six years.

What's great? Try the seamless brilliant Breakaway Cam that sweeps you right into skater-on-goalie one-on-ones. On breakaways you now hold Triangle to get control of the player's stick, so

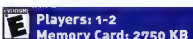
there's no contrived deke posing as a slick move. The Franchise Mode is 10 seasons of blissful replayability, the Olympic tournament will inspire you to trash a hotel room with excitement, and the animations don't get in the way of the hockey. Plus, there's no slowdown. Anywhere. Ever.

What's bad? Shots take too long to come off the stick, eliminating quick shots. Fighting is tragic (take it out!). And why, when any player is hot does his Overall jump to 99, while a cold player's Overall (even Mario Lemieux) drops to 50?

This game rules the rink. Just say "puck it" and go buy it. Now.

Final Score ●●●●●

Todd Zuniga



NHL 2002



NHL 2002



Portal Runner



Portal Runner

Portal Runner

Publisher 3DO

Developer 3DO

Web Site www.3do.com

Say what you want about Portal Runner. You could say that as a 3D adventure it's incredibly bland, and you'd be right. You could say that as a platformer it's clunky and frustrating due to its awful controls, and you'd also be right. You could say the story is boring and disjointed, that the characters are cookie-cutter clichés, that the graphics range from slightly above to depressingly below average. Say what you want...just don't call it an Army Men game. 'Cause even though it has the same characters as the Army Men games, from the ever-popular Sarge to the nameless tank soldiers—and even though it appears to use the same engine as the mediocre Sarge's Heroes 2 for PS2—and even though it has the same feeling of having been created by some robot that feeds on focus groups and spits out random conglomerations of overdone game formulas, it is NOT an Army Men game. Somehow.

In spite of this fact, the game does manage to hit some high points. Sadly, these don't really show up until you start exploring the last of the three worlds—but luckily, getting there won't take you more than a long afternoon. That makes this a solid rental, but I'd suggest saving your purchasing dollars for something else. Like, say, an Army Men game.

Final Score ●●

Joe Rybicki



Top Gun



Top Gun

Top Gun: Combat Zones

Publisher Titus

Developer Digital Integration

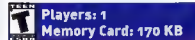
Web Site www.titusgames.com

I wonder if they give points for effort at the real Top Gun? Somehow I doubt it. Too bad—Combat Zones has a lot going for it. Real-life planes, real-life weapons, real-world locations—it's the closest thing to an honest-to-God flight sim a PlayStation has seen. Add to that some really sharp graphics, especially in the area of ground textures and structures; you can fly through cities, skim along the surface of oceans, and dive into realistic-looking canyons. Seems like a surefire hit, right?

Well, no. One of the problems is fundamental: Top Gun can't seem to decide whether it wants to be a simulation or an arcade flyer. On the one hand you have some serious difficulty, like trying to hunt down a single fighter in a cloudy sky with minimal computer assistance. And fairly realistic damage ratios can put you on the edge of your seat from time to time. But on the other hand, the game throws all kinds of distracting, arcadey text at your face, proclaiming "First Blood!" or "5 Hits—Great!" Plus the controls just don't feel right: the planes feel sluggish and overweighted, as though the physics engine were oversimplified. And the monotonous, unbalanced missions don't help matters. Though it'd be a fair rental, I'd suggest holding out for Ace Combat 04.

Final Score ●●●

Joe Rybicki



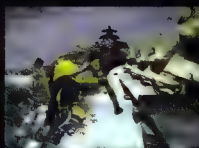
MIDWAY
www.midway.com

START

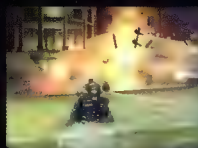
FINISH



Throttle the competition with fast, close hand-to-hand combat.



Hyper-realistic racing velocity and major air give new meaning to "breakneck speed."



Make 'em feel you with combat weapons like snow bombs, missiles, and The Atomic Snowball.



Sneak Preview @ www.arcticthunder.midway.com

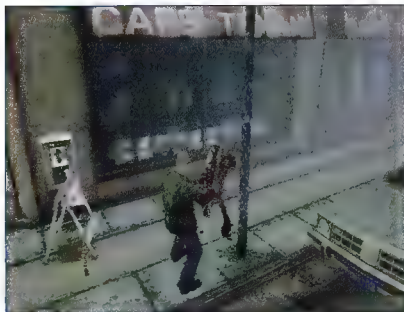
ARCTIC
THUNDER



PlayStation 2



Mild Violence



Silent Hill 2

Prepare to have your head messed with and your underwear soiled

Publisher Konami

Developer Konami

Web Site www.konami.com

Silent Hill 2 gets under your skin. It neigners your senses, plucks on your heartstrings, terrifies you, creeps you out, makes you jump and quite surprisingly, on occasion, bores you. Hang on a second. What was that last one?

Bores you, yes. Maybe it's because the cool bits are so frickin' cool that the not-so-cool bits really stand out; I don't know, but there are times when I was frustrated and grouchy. Usually that's a good indicator that I'm bored.

Take, for example, the first 10 minutes of the game. It's all very moody. You start off standing in a dirty-looking public toilet, getting all sad and depressed as you peer in the mirror and ponder the past. You run outside, grab the map from your car, and then start running. And running and running and running. For 10 whole minutes! The only thing of note

that happens is that you run into a very nice girl in a graveyard who seems terribly friendly, but is ultimately just setting herself up for a scene later on. Aside from this brief interlude, the only other things you have to do involve opening a couple of gates and peering through the pea-soup fog. Somehow this is forgivable, though. The atmosphere is so effectively conveyed that you spend the entire 10 minutes on the edge of your seat worrying what's about to leap out of the fog at you.

Eventually something does actually leap out

of the fog at you, and you finally feel like the game has actually begun properly. A lot of all this is psychology, I guess. For the jumpy, crap-your-pants scary bits to work, you have to have extended periods of



relative inaction so that you're "ready" to be taken by surprise. What a shame that this inactivity more often than not leaves you wandering around wondering why every door you try to open elicits the response: "It looks like the lock is broken. I can't open it." The further you get in, the more you'll wish that you could just point to the map and tell the game, "I want to go there."

Fortunately it's not all bad. This isn't like one of those godawful RPGs that make you run backward and forward for miles and miles just to make everything more time-consuming. The action tends to be held together in "Acts" where you'll be confined to a certain location in order to complete a number of tasks. These tasks usually involve solving a couple of puzzles, killing a number of bad guys, and then soiling yourself when the boss turns up the second you open a door. None of it's terribly difficult to deal with, and when things hit their stride, the pacing is very exciting.

The difficulty of both the combat

and the puzzles can be changed before you start the game, and across the three main settings, the content of the game changes a great deal. In "easy" mode, the bad guys drop like flies if you so much as look at them in a funny way, and the puzzles are from the moron school of logic. At the opposite end of the spectrum, boss fights in "hard" mode require superhuman concentration, while the puzzles are accompanied by clues so cryptic they'll make your eyes bleed.

To be honest, if you were to simply analyze the "gameplay" aspects of the game, you'd come away singularly unimpressed. If you're the type of loser who skips every cutscene without ever watching it, or worse still, are the kind of "hard-core" gamer who buys Japanese



games and plays through without ever knowing what the hell is going on, then you're not going to enjoy this. No doubt we'll get mail from these folks whining that this is too short and too simple. You know who you are. You're the ones who gneep about Metal Gear Solid being too short as well.

To fully appreciate Silent Hill 2, you have to let it take over your life for a while. You have to tolerate the boring bits and surrender yourself

to the psychological foreplay before it administers the full-on head-k. Let it buy you a drink, take you to dinner, and then take you back to its place to have its wicked way with you. You know you'll love it.

The story really is quite fabulous. It plays with your mind and, like a good movie, has you hypothesizing about the ending before you're even halfway through. Sure, it has some gross bits, but unlike the Resident Evil series, the scares aren't cheap. The truly nasty bits are those that you don't see, or those that you only see the aftermath of. One of the creepiest characters in the game is a little girl. She doesn't actually do anything particularly out of the ordinary, but her apparent comfort in the dirty and horrific decrepitude of the town is downright unsettling.

Obviously the spectacular presentation is a big help. The graphics are absolutely stunning throughout, depicting the derelict abandonment of the town in a way that's unlike anything ever seen in a game before. The peeling paint, the rusty metal, the dirt and grime—it's all there. The visual splendor is only bettered by the sound effects that are as responsible, if not more so, for the scariness of the experience as any amount of plot, characterization or things jumping out of the darkness.

The best way to play this game is alone, with the lights out and the sound turned up. It will freak you out. I guarantee it.

Final Score ●●●●●

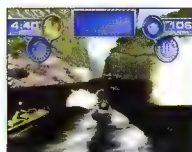
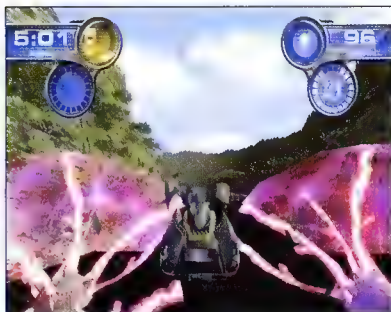
John Davison



Players: 1
Memory Card: 170 KB

WHAAT IS SILENT HILL 2?

While the original was a survival-horror game with plenty of action, Silent Hill 2 is definitely more of an "interactive ambience" with puzzles and combat thrown in for good measure. As with Metal Gear Solid, a lot of the psychology with the game is driven entirely by the player. You would be forgiven for thinking this is a violent game because of the horror involved. It isn't necessarily. It's possible, for example, to play through the majority of the story without actually getting into too many scrapes. You generally choose whether or not to kill stuff, and ultimately you dictate the violent content of the experience by your own actions.



Spy Hunter

Guess what? Remakes of '80s games *can* be good!

Publisher Paradigm

Developer Midway

Web Site www.midway.com

An early cutscene in *Spy Hunter* shows us right off the bat that Paradigm knows how to properly acknowledge a classic: "I have reason to believe that this is the very man who crippled our endeavors in '83," proclaims the leader of the terrorist organization NOSTRA, obviously referring to the events of the 1983 game that first set you behind the wheel of a fully armed G-615S Interceptor. But more importantly, Paradigm has paid homage in the way that truly matters: by instilling **gameplay that equals—I'd even say surpasses—that of the original**. In *Spy Hunter* for PS2, we have not only the very best 3D re-creation of a hit from gaming's early days (sorry, Frogger, Galaga, Breakout and Friends), but also a title that no doubt will one day be known as every bit a classic

of the original's caliber.

If you sampled the two levels on our PS2 demo disc last month, you already know what I mean. *Spy Hunter* has everything you'd find in a good blockbuster action film—breakneck speed, death-defying stunts, explosions galore—and it **engrosses you in the way that only a great video game can**. Simply weaving through barrels with the spot-on control in the first of the two training missions immerses you night away, while your car's seamless transformations proceed to wow you. Your vehicle comes equipped with the ability to morph from a car into a boat, should it land on water—even a motorcycle when you've taken a lot of damage. And nothing's cooler than procuring a stealth item and watching your Interceptor speed down the street without being seen.

You also have to love the sensation of shooting up NOSTRA vehicles—nothing beats locking on to an enemy helicopter, connecting with a guided missile, and watching it struggle to stay airborne, only to crash right in front of you a hundred yards down the road.

You've even got some innovative level design. I particularly enjoyed the one where NOSTRA has placed a bomb at an F1 race. The only way to disarm it? Participate yourself! It all happens to some great music, too, highlighted by Saliva's "Peter Gunn Theme" remix.

A couple of pesky annoyances put me off a bit, though. For one thing, **hitting L3 to target just doesn't work well**. I often instinctively pushed L1, which only changed my weapon instead of tar-

geting the one I wanted.

Spy Hunter's level advancement setup also can get to you, as you must fulfill nearly all secondary objectives to move on. This wouldn't be so bad if you didn't have to succeed in accomplishing all of the other objectives that you already



fulfilled in order to get credit. **It makes things harder than they have to be**, and I can only surmise that the reasoning for this was to add several hours to a 14-mission, otherwise short game.

The two-player challenges are a little disappointing, as well, with the "collect the most SATCOMs" and straight races seeming mostly like a last-minute attachment. However, there's no beating the few competitions where your goal is to run over more chickens than the other player!

But despite any minor issues that hold *Spy Hunter* from perfection, Midway still has an instant classic on its hands. I just have to wonder if 18 years from now, hearing "Spy Hunter" will force gamers to think way back to '83...or to '01. **Final Score** ●●●●● **Chris Baker**

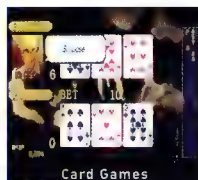
Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 38 KB



Card Games



Crossroad Crisis



Card Games



Crossroad Crisis

Card Games

Publisher Agatec

Developer D3 Publisher

Web Site www.agatec.com

This is a great idea. A great, great idea. But it's a great idea that's executed really, really badly. And that's a damn shame.

See, the premise of the cunningly titled *Card Games* is to play, well, card games. You know, for money. With me so far? Here's the twist: You then use that money to buy things in the game. OK, it ain't particle physics, but it **does add some purpose to the essentially purposeless casino-game genre**. It's an idea so simple that no one seems to have thought of it until now. So, kudos to Agatec.

Except...the things you buy in the game, with the exception of passes to the higher-stakes games (a fantastic idea), are really, really dumb. Really. The point is to outfit your "player room" with so much gold that it starts to look like Liberace's bathroom. Seriously, all the highest-level items are gold. Who the hell needs a gold television? Whatever.

The other problem is that **the game interfaces are so clunky as to make the games almost unplayable**. The blackback interface, for example, makes me want to take a nap. Plus, some of the rules aren't quite right. Since when is the seven-card-stud format two down, three up, one, up, one down?

I'd like to see this idea used in a more competent game. **Final Score** ●● **Joe Rybicki**

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 1 block

Crossroad Crisis

Publisher Agatec

Developer Success

Web Site www.agatec.com

Question: Why did the chicken cross the road?

Answer: Because Agatec changed the working title of this \$10 puzzle game from Tic Tac Chicken to the overwrought *Crossroad Crisis*!

Yes, I know—my riddle isn't very funny. Actually, it's not funny at all. Heck, **it doesn't even make sense!**

But then again, neither does this game. I mean, why would anyone want to place a cute baby chick in the middle of a pond, floating perilously on tiles that you have to link up and eliminate in order to call forth a life preserver that whisks the little clucker to safety? Such wanton cruelty boggles the mind!! And it ain't just savage salvos against chicks here. During the two-player mode, the, er, fowl treatment extends to fluffily baby ducks as well!

But before all you animal activists get up in arms, know this: The cruelest cut of all is inflicted on the *human* gamer who unwittingly plunks down a hard-earned sawbuck on this short-lived puzzle. Sure, **it's fun for about five minutes**, but beyond that, well...nope. See, it's essentially just an elaborate minigame, one that lacks any sort of additive, haffa-comme-back-and-play-it-just-one-more-time quality. After blasting through the entire game in a mere few minutes, I had enough. And that, my friends, isn't fun, or funny, at all.

Final Score ●● **Gary Steinman**

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 1 block

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Photo: Walter Iooss Jr.

Derek Jeter caught reading.

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Inspector Gadget



Inspector Gadget

Inspector Gadget: Crazy Maze

Publisher Ubisoft
Developer Vision Media
Web Site www.ubisoft.com

Here's my take on the conversation that led to Gadget's Crazy Maze

"Hey, Jim—remember that really mediocre puzzle game you worked on a few years back? The one that got sh-tanned by the old boss?"

"Yeah, Bob. You mean the one with the falling blocks?"

No, no. Not the derivative one. I mean the one with that guy wandering through different towns, pushing jewels together to eliminate them, trying to avoid those dopey thugs..."

"Ah, yes. I remember. I set it up so you could only push the jewels, and not pull them, so if you nudge a jewel into a corner, you're screwed and have to start the level over."

That was by far my favorite feature."

"Uh, right. Well guess what? I just signed the biggest license deal of my life. I signed..."

"Who? Damn it, Bob, tell me!"

"Inspector Gadget!"

"Oh. Oh my. Oh my goodness. But how? With what money?"

"Apparently, he needs the cash. Got him real cheap. A steal, I tell ya! So let's slap him onto this game and get it out the door pronto!"

"Hey, I've got an idea! I can cobble together a muddled multiplayer mode. Kids like that! I'll build in support for two Multiplats!"

"Perfect. That way, all eight suckers...er, people who buy the game can play it together!"

Final Score ●●

Gary Steinman

Players: 1-8
Memory Card: 1 block



NBA ShootOut 2002

NBA ShootOut 2002

Publisher Sony CEA
Developer 989 Sports

Web Site www.989sports.com

After last year's marvelous NBA playoff run by the Philadelphia 76ers and the Milwaukee Bucks, I found the magic in basketball that I've only heard about. Sure, I may like Ray Allen primarily because he starred in a Spike Lee flick (*He Got Game*) and sure, I may like Allen Iverson because he's a half-inch shorter than I am. But the key is that I've caught the fever, regardless of why I've caught the fever.

With this in mind, it's hard for me to slide my next-gen enthusiasm as far in reverse and get excited about a PS one basketball game. But, still, it's happened. With all the 989-bashing I toss around with abandon, ShootOut is a shot in the arm that makes me enthusiastic about a PS2 ShootOut prospect. It's solid basketball. For those with out "the deuce"

Last year I was far from pleased by ShootOut. It was a pitiful game that didn't bother to compete with EA Sports' NBA Live. But that was last year. Last year I hated the shooting meter. It's been done away with. Thankfully. Last year, I could've defended Kobe Bryant better. Now defending is a pleasant experience. Last year the inside game was enough to make me cringe with frustration; the players just looked like a big glob of paint. Now, it's easy to discern between my pipe-hitters and theirs. Last year the announcing was, how should I say, gawdful! No longer. Somebody convinced the commentators to watch the entire game. Although they do

seem a bit inebriated when they refer to Philly's Eric Snow as Knicks forward Latrell Sprewell.

One huge annoyance that carries over from last year: I sometimes shoot a ridiculous granny-style shot when I'm just trying a pump-fake. It makes me angry in a way that causes my throat to hurt and my head to ache.

The Create-A-Dunk is still around, but that high wore off years ago. I guess it's a nice touch though, for the over-bored.

Overall, the AI's been ramped up and last year's draft class is rewed and ready. But you'll have to create Mr. Jordan on your own. **Final Score** ●●●●

Todd Zuniga

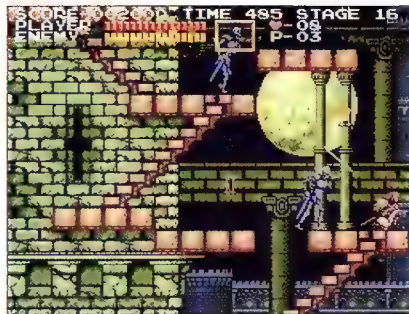
Players: 1-8
Memory Card: 4 blocks



NBA ShootOut 2002



NBA ShootOut 2002



Castlevania Chronicles

Great 2D gameplay never gets old

Publisher Konami

Developer Konami

Web Site www.konami.com

For die-hard Castlevania fans such as myself, Konami has just granted us a giant favor in the form of Castlevania Chronicles. Even though the game's nearly a decade old, Chronicles is still one of the better installments in the series, and one definitely worthy of a place in any

true Castlevania fan's collection.

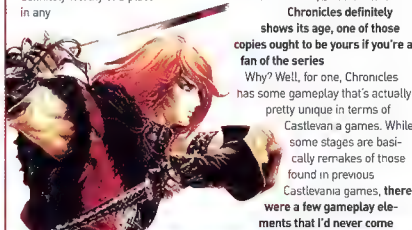
Since the game was never previously released in the States (it was only found on a PC platform in Japan), most gamers here have never been able to check it out. So Konami has graciously pressed 30,000 copies for the American market, and has put the game at a fair

price point of

\$20. And while

Chronicles definitely shows its age, one of those copies ought to be yours if you're a fan of the series

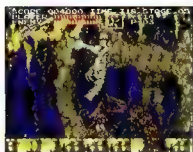
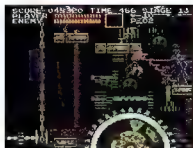
Why? Well, for one, Chronicles has some gameplay that's actually pretty unique in terms of Castlevania games. While some stages are basically remakes of those found in previous Castlevania games, there were a few gameplay elements that I'd never come



NEXT GENERATION CASTLEVANIA

Some of you may remember Clush talking about a new Castlevania for the PS2 a few issues back. Well, as a special bonus in Castlevania Chronicles, Konami has included an interview with Castlevania: SOTN/Chronicles producer Koji Igarashi in which he talks about the next game. Although he remains vague on a lot of subjects, Mr. Igarashi does mention that it will play a lot like Symphony of the Night

and that he has assembled his most talented team yet for the new installment. Also, he states that the game will likely remain 2D (thank goodness). For more on the future of the series as well as background info on Castlevania SOTN and Chronicles, make sure to check out this video. But also make sure you're prepared for some cheesy production values, because it's pretty laughable at times.



across before in any of the games in the series (and I've played nearly every one). Finding these was a pleasant surprise.

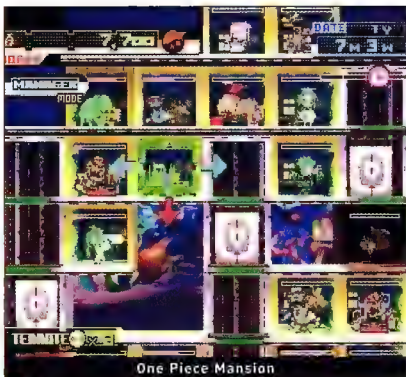
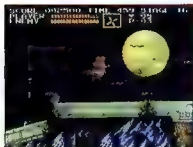
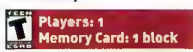
Another reason I'd recommend the game is for its difficulty. Yeah, I'll admit to having thrown the controller a few times (damn Medusa heads!), but there's nothing quite like the feeling of getting through tight spots in games like these, and trust me, you'll get it quite often.

I also like to recommend this game because of how surprising the graphics are. Sure, they're nothing next to the stunning visuals of Castlevania, SOTN, but you'll be surprised how the 2D backgrounds still hold up despite being 10 years old. As for the music, it's not bad, but not as stellar as some of the other games in the series. The new remixed version of the soundtrack in the game does add some nice flair to the original, though.

Chronicles also comes with an art gallery mode as well as an interview with the producer of the game (see sidebar), which are a nice bonus and worth checking out.

But if there's really one big reason why I'd suggest this game to fans of this series, it's to support the franchise we've all come to know and love. Help show that there's still a need for 2D gaming and that this series has its own dedicated fans.

Final Score ●●●●
Sam Kennedy



One Piece Mansion

Publisher Capcom
Developer Capcom
Web Site www.capcom.com

I was reasonably interested in this game before I actually booted it up. After all, Capcom quietly released my all-time favorite puzzle game back in '96 (Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo, in case you were curious). And at first I thought the game might live up to my excitement. It's got a **nicely unique premise**: You are the manager of a growing apartment building, and must locate your tenants so that their particular quirks don't cause their neighbors to get fed up and move out, all the while trying to drive out invasive tenants from "Syndicate 5" [OK, I'll admit it: I have no idea what that means]. And the pace is frantic enough for the best puzzle games.

But there are two fatal flaws here: First of all, the game's just too darned short. Only seven levels comprise the story mode, and the "Endless" mode doesn't offer more than a temporary diversion. And more importantly, **there's no two-player mode**. So in spite of the novelty, there's next to no replay value. And that's just criminal when it comes to puzzle games.

I'd recommend One Piece Mansion for die-hard puzzle fans, but even then only as a rental. Contrary to the rules of classic puzzle games, it takes a long time to pick up, but a short time to master. I'll pass, thanks.

Final Score ●●
Joe Rybicki

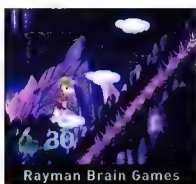
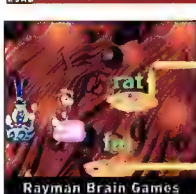
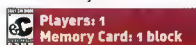


Rayman Brain Games

Publisher Ubi Soft
Developer Ubi Soft
Web Site www.ubisoft.com

If only all edutainment titles looked this good! Brain Games is basically a stripped-down version of the original 2D Rayman, but with math and word levels thrown in. Our 5-year-old critic had a real blast with the handful of practice levels—we couldn't tear her away from it! But the actual "activity" levels had **too many simultaneous challenges**—like finding the right word while jumping from a ledge and avoiding a baddie—that it was too much to handle. Still, a worthy purchase.

Final Score ●●●●
Bob and Kelsey Conlon

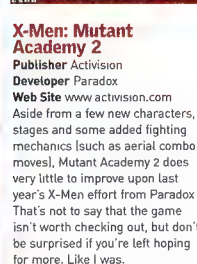
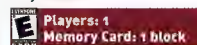


Tiny Toon Adventures: Plucky's Big Adventure

Publisher Conspiracy
Developer Warthog
Web Site conspiracygames.com

Here's the skinny on this 3D point-and-click puzzle/adventure title: **If you're old enough to read the overwhelming amount of text this game slings at you, then you're far too old to play it.** But if you're too young to follow along as Plucky and his mates blather away, then you won't have the slightest clue as to what's going on here. And if you somehow fall into an unknown third category, then, well, you still won't want to play this game.

Final Score ●●
Gary Steinman



For one thing, I was hoping for a little bit better balance this time around. **There are still characters that I feel are hard to use correctly**, due to moves and combos being awkwardly timed or otherwise hard to pull off. Things can get a bit clumsy at times.



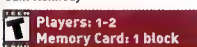
Also, I was hoping for some more interesting gameplay ideas for this one. While I do really enjoy the way both Mutant Academy games play (especially the combo system, which can be lots of fun at times), **the whole joint super-move meter just doesn't work for me**. It's really not that fun to try to pull off the moves in the middle of a battle. In the gameplay arena, Capcom's X-Men fighting games still blow this one away.

And lastly, I was hoping for a bit better AI this time around. Enemies will dish out combos and special moves enough to create a challenge, but there's never a true feeling of intensity as though you were battling a real human opponent. Two-player is a must.

But at least, like the original, **Mutant Academy 2 has some good graphics going for it**. I really like the way Paradox was able to pull off the X-Men characters on the PS one. The backgrounds vary, but for the most part they're pretty good too. At times the screen will bog down because of all the action going on, but it's acceptable when you take into account the amount of detail on the screen.

As with the original, I suppose Mutant Academy is pretty much only for hardcore X-Men fans or for those in dire need of a new PS one fighter. The game just lacks the depth to keep hardcore fighting-game fans interested. But really, do you expect anything more? Yeah, me either.

Final Score ●●●●
Sam Kennedy





Spider-Man 2

Enter: Electro

Strangely enough, lightning doesn't strike twice

Publisher Activision

Developer Vicarious Visions

Web Site www.activision.com

I've said it before and I'll say it again: Last year's Spider-Man 2 was the best superhero game ever. Though a little short and not without its camera issues, its great variety of gameplay, first-rate visuals and overall great, humorous story made it something I returned to on multiple occasions.

Know what, though? As much as I loved the first one, Spider-Man 2 just didn't speak to my Spider-Senses nearly as well. While by no means a bad game—in fact, it's probably one of the better PS one action titles of the year—*Vicarious Visions* failed to match the overall magic captured so well by *Neverver's* original. It's a lesser game in every way.

On the gameplay front, I once again have to commend the variety of different types of action found throughout the six to eight hours of gameplay. The levels just aren't quite as cool this time, seeming to rely a great deal more on puzzle solving than the quest against Doc Ock and Carnage did. This would be fine, if not for the fact that the puzzles are so simple, even Rhino could solve them.

But what I really miss from a **gameplay perspective** are the **chase scenes**. Whether the cops pursued you relentlessly from building top to building top or you did the chasing yourself when after a villain like Venom, I'm not sure I've ever experienced more exhilarating PS one gaming than in such scenes the first time out. You won't find them in Spider-Man 2. Not a one.

I was also disappointed by the camera angles, noticeably worse in the sequel than the original. Case in point: the boss fight with Hammerhead. Imagine your previous fight with Rhino—as in a guy who likes to ram you with his head—only within a more enclosed area. The camera makes this particular fight very difficult—not because it's hard, but because its bad angles let you down. Not cool.

In all, though, I'd have to say the



skirmishes with supervillains are a high point. Better puzzles themselves than the game's "real" puzzles, each nemesis has a weakness that takes a few tries to figure out at times. And even when you do determine it, that doesn't mean you've automatically won. A couple fights might even take a good 15 minutes to endure.

That is, if you can endure the villains themselves. As if you couldn't tell from the game's subtitle, **Spider-Man 2's evildoers pale in comparison to last year's ensemble**. Sure, you've got a battle with The Lizard—a first-class Spider-Villain if there ever was one—but after that, the best it gets are Electro, Sandman and Shocker, who, despite being cre-



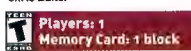
ations of a man I greatly admire, Stan Lee (returning for some great narration, incidentally), just really aren't that cool. And don't get me started on Hammerhead and the Beetle (the latter showing up only in a cinematic. Why not an appearance from Morbius? Kingpin? Hobgoblin, for cryin' out loud?)

The story involved is also very run-of-the-mill, with no real surprises. You're basically out to save the world's sexiest, most curvaceous electrical scientist [Dr. Watts—get it?] from a maniacal Electro scheme. I do have to say, though, that the cutscenes are well-executed and performed, especially by Rino Romano, every bit as perfect in his Spider-Role as last time and as on the Spider-Man cartoons of the '90s. I cracked up at the game's **pop-culture references**, running the gamut from *Die Hard*, to *Goodfellas*, to *Sesame Street*. The Marvel references disappointed me, however. Rather than have Spidey confront fellow heroes (X-Men appear in training modes, but that's it), we get forced newspaper headlines and dialogue referring to the likes of Elektra and Blade.

Even with its inferiorities to its predecessor, though, I can't help but recommend Spider-Man 2 to those itching for a good superhero game. I just wish it made me want to scream "Excelsior!" like the last one did.

Final Score ●●●●

Chris Baker



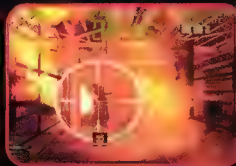
PS2 Review Archive

Game names in green indicate a Greatest Hits title. Ratings in red indicate a five-disc score.

Game	Publisher	Score	Issues
4x4 EVO	GOD Games	●●●●	44
The Adventures of Bookie & Cream	Ageltek	●●●●	41
Aqua Aero	3DO	●●●●	43
Ali-Star Baseball 2002	Ageltek	●●●●	45
Armored Core 2	Ageltek	●●●●	39
Armored Core 2: Another Age	Ageltek	●●●●	48
Army Men: Air Attack	3DO	●●●●	44
Army Men: Green Rage	3DO	●●	45
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2	3DO	●●●●	42
ATV Offroad Fury	Sony CEA	●●●●	42
Bloody Roar 3	Activision	●●●●	47
The Boatman	Square EA	●●●●	42
CART Fury	Midway	●	47
City Crisis	Take 2	●●●●	48
Cool Boarders 2001	Sony CEA	●●●●	46
Crazy Taxi	Acclaim	●●●●	46
Dark Angel: Vampire Apocalypse	Midway	●●	49
Dark Cloud	Sony CEA	●●●●	46
Dead or Alive 2: Hardcore	Tecmo	●●●●	39
Disney's Donald Duck: Goin' Quackers	Ubi Soft	●●●●	42
Driving Emotion Type-S	Square EA	●●●●	41
Dynasty Warriors 2	Koei	●●●●	38
Echelon: Tactical	Konami	●●	49
Escape From Monkey Island	LucasArts	●●●●	46
Eternal Ring	Ageltek	●●	39
ESPN International Track & Field	Konami	●●●●	36
ESPN NBA 3-Point Shootout	Konami	●●	44
ESPN NBA 2K11	Konami	●●	42
ESPN National Hockey Night	Konami	●●	45
ESPN Winter X Games Snowboarding	Konami	●●●●	41
ESPN X Games Skateboarding	Konami	●●●●	49
Evergrace	Ageltek	●●●●	39
Extermination	Deep Space	●●●●	41
Eye of the Storm	Konami	●●●●	43
F1 Championship Season 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	41
Fantavision	Sony CEA	●●●●	40
FIFA 2001 Major League Soccer	EA Sports	●●●●	45
FIFA 2002 Major League Soccer	EA Sports	●●●●	46
Gauntlet	Tecmo	●●●●	38
GoldenEye: Dark Legacy	Midway	●●●●	46
Grand Theft Auto III	Konami	●●●●	39
Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec	SOEA	●●●●	46
Griffin's Blaz	3DO	●●●●	44
Heroes of Might and Magic: Quest for the Dragonbone Staff	Crave	●●●●	42
High Heat: MLB 2002	EA Games	●●●●	39
Kong: Master of Bungle	EA Games	●●●●	42
Kumon	EA Sports	●●●●	47
Kumon 2: Lament's Vell	Infogrames	●●●●	41
Kout: The Last Days	EA Sports	●●●●	48
Madeline NFL 2001	EA Sports	●●●●	48
Madeline NFL 2002	EA Sports	●●●●	48
MDK2: Armageddon	Interplay	●●●●	45
Midnight Club	Rockstar	●●●●	39
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Banana	●	48
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Namco	●●●●	39
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Infogrames	●●●●	47
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Colossalorder	●●●●	46
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	THQ	●●●●	47
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	EA Sports	●●●●	40
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Infogrames	●●●●	47
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	EA Sports	●●●●	42
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	EA Sports	●●●●	42
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Sony CEA	●●●●	47
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	EA Sports	●●●●	47
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Sony CEA	●●●●	41
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	EA Sports	●●●●	48
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Sony CEA	●●●●	48
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	EA Sports	●●●●	43
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	EA Sports	●●●●	38
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Rockstar	●●●●	43
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Capcom	●●●●	43
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Activision	●●●●	39
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Take 2	●●●●	48
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	EA Games	●●●●	41
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Ubi Soft	●●●●	44
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Acclaim	●●●●	41
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Midway	●●●●	40
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Infogrames	●●●●	40
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	THQ	●●●●	46
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Capcom	●●●●	48
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Namco	●●●●	38
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Konami	●●●●	43
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	EA Sports	●●●●	48
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	EA Games	●●●●	45
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Take Two Int.	●●●●	48
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Konami	●●●●	41
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Konami	●●●●	39
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Konami	●●●●	49
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Working Designs	●●●●	40
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Activision	●●●●	40
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Rockstar	●●●●	39
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	Hot-B	●●●●	48
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	EA Sports BIG	●●●●	38
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	LucasArts	●●●●	40
Midnight Club: Journey to Jubah	LucasArts	●●●●	43



Never try to outrun a sniper. You'll only die tired.



Silent Scope 2 Dark Silhouette brings heart-stopping, single and two player arcade action to the PlayStation®2 computer entertainment system. You'll be armed with the latest hi-tech sniping equipment like the X-Ray Scope in order to thwart terrorist attacks throughout Europe.

With stunning graphics, multiple story lines and four modes of play, Silent Scope 2 delivers hours of sharp-shooting suspense. When there's no place to run all that's left to do is fight.



Blood
Violence



PlayStation 2

**SILENT
SCOPE 2**
Dark Silhouette™

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PS2 Review Archive (cont.)

Game	Publisher	Score	Issue	Game	Publisher	Score	Issue	Game	Publisher	Score	Issue	Game	Publisher	Score	Issue
Street Fighter EX 3	Capcom	*****	47	Bloody Ray	Sony CEA	****	6	Dubio	Electronic Arts	*****	8	Grand Tour Racing '98	Activision	****	1
Street Pals	THQ	*****	39	Bloody Ray 2	Sony CEA	*****	21	The King of Kings: Via Las Vegas	Fox Interactive	****	31	Grandia	THQ	*****	26
Summer	Capcom	*****	39	Blurs Big Musical	THQ	****	46	Pilgrim Digital Card Battle	Bandai	****	88	Granstream Saga	SEGA	****	10
Super Brawl 4 Move	THQ	****	41	Board Games	Apogee	****	31	The Grand Theft Auto	Bandai	****	38	Gran Turismo	Yamaha/Universal	****	1
Surfing ISO	Rockstar	****	40	Commodore Fantasy Race	Apogee	****	39	Warhammer 2	Bandai	****	46	Grid Series	SEGA	****	34
Swing Into Golf	EA Games	****	38	Commodore Party Edition	Valus	****	38	Ilmo Crisis	Capcom	*****	25	Grind Warriors	Tek	2	1
Tennis Tournament	EA Games	****	38	Commodore Party Edition	Valus	****	38	Ilmo Crisis 2	Capcom	****	25	Grind Warriors	Tek	2	1
Test Drive Off-Road: Wide Open	EA Games	****	48	The Benbury Islands	Keneco	****	47	Ilmo's Discard	UBI Soft	****	36	Grind Battle Assault	Universal	****	40
There Were Punks Outside Your House	Billfrost	*****	41	Boonsails	SouthPeak	****	27	Donald Duck: Gosh! Quackers	UBI Soft	****	39	Hardball '99	Acclaim	****	15
Time Masters	EA Sports	*****	49	Bottom of the 9th '97	Konami	****	44	Dragon Ball Z: Budokai	Capcom	****	44	Harvest Moon: Back to Nature	Acclaim	****	15
Time Riders	Namco	****	39	Bowling	Apogee	****	43	DRB Bikes	DreamCatcher	****	48	Heavy Metal	Acclaim	****	41
Time Shift	EA Games	****	39	Boxing	Apogee	****	45	Dragon Tails: The Reckoning	WooHoo	****	38	High of Darkness	Interplay	****	13
Tokyo Empire Racer Zone	Orion	****	45	Breaker Ruzamas	Shogun Inc.	****	15	Dragon Valley	Hamco	****	38	High Kick City Frenzy	WuJinSoft	****	20
Tony Hawk Pro Skater Drift	EA Sports	****	45	Brave Crusade	Shogun Inc.	****	14	Dragon Ball Z	Bandai	****	38	Hot Chick	LucasArts	****	1
Triple Play Baseball	EA Sports	****	45	Brave Crusade	Shogun Inc.	****	14	Dragonquest	Hamco	****	38	Hot Chick Baseball 2000	300	0	22
Twisted Metal: Black	SEGA	*****	47	Breath of Fire III	Capcom	****	15	Dracula 2	GT Interactive	****	40	High Heat Metal	300	0	43
Two Men and a Crutch	THQ	****	40	Breath of Fire IV	Capcom	****	40	Dracula 2	GT Interactive	****	40	High Heat Metal 2002	300	0	43
Unreal Tournament	Informations	****	40	Brigandage	Apogee	****	15	Dracula 2	GT Interactive	****	40	Hills of Wier	Informations	****	43
War of Wits	3DO	****	48	Broken Sword	THQ	****	5	Championship League	Acclaim	****	41	Hot Streets Golf	SEGA	****	7
Warriors of Might & Magic	3DO	****	44	Broken Sword 2	THQ	****	5	Hot Streets Golf	SEGA	****	40	Hot Streets Golf	SEGA	****	7
Wild Wild West	3DO	****	44	Broken Sword 3	THQ	****	5	Infamous Land of the Babes	GT Interactive	****	41	Hot Streets Golf	SEGA	****	7
Wildback	Koei	****	43	Brutalistic: Grand Pro Bowling	THQ	****	13	Duke Nukem: Time to Kill	GT Interactive	****	5	Hot Wheels: Turbo Racing	Electronic Arts	****	20
World Destruction League: Demolish Tanks	Koei	****	43	Brutalistic: Grand Pro Bowling 2	THQ	****	13	Duke Nukem: Total Meltdown	GT Interactive	****	5	Hydra Theater	Midway	****	49
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Yankee Baseball City Skater	Koei	****	42	Brutalistic: Grand Pro Bowling 2											

PS one Review Archive

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GAMING

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Mega Man Legends 2	Capcom	99	39	NFL Gameway 2002	99 Sports	99	19	Rainbow 2	HBG	99	36	Thunder Force IV	Working Designs	99	13
Mega Man ZX	Capcom	99	44	NFL X-Men	99 Sports	99	11	Rainbow Wild	HBG	99	34	Thunder Force V: PCA Tour Golf	EA Sports	99	16
Mega Man ZX	Capcom	99	41	NFL X-Men 2	99 Studios	99	19	Star Wars: Episode I: The Phantom Menace	EA Sports	99	41	Tiger's Honey Project	Nintendo Co	99	41
Metal Gear Solid	Konami	99	44	N-Gear Racing	EA Sports	99	35	Sabrina, the Teenage Witch	Knowledge Adventure	99	45	Tiger's Honey Project: Titan	NewKidCo	99	41
Metal Gear Solid VR Missions	Konami	99	25	NHL '99	EA Sports	99	15	A Trench Is This?	Sony CEA	99	41	Tiger's Honey Project: Titan	Knowledge Adventure	99	45
Metroid	Capcom	99	43	NHL 2000	EA Sports	99	43	Star Wars: Episode I: The Phantom Menace	Sony CEA	99	41	Top Gun: The Third Dimension	EA Sports	99	41
Micro Machines	Midway	99	35	NHL 2001	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy	Square EA	99	41	Ty: The Heroic Beast	NewKidCo	99	18
Micro Machines 2: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2002	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 2	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 2	NewKidCo	99	27
Micro Machines 3: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2003	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 3	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 3	NewKidCo	99	27
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Micro Machines 5: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2005	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 5	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 5	NewKidCo	99	27
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Micro Machines 17: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2017	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 17	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 17	NewKidCo	99	27
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Micro Machines 21: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2021	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 21	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 21	NewKidCo	99	27
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Micro Machines 29: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2029	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 29	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 29	NewKidCo	99	27
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Micro Machines 42: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2042	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 42	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 42	NewKidCo	99	27
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Micro Machines 59: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2059	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 59	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 59	NewKidCo	99	27
Micro Machines 60: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2060	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 60	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 60	NewKidCo	99	27
Micro Machines 61: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2061	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 61	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 61	NewKidCo	99	27
Micro Machines 62: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2062	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 62	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 62	NewKidCo	99	27
Micro Machines 63: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2063	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 63	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 63	NewKidCo	99	27
Micro Machines 64: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2064	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 64	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 64	NewKidCo	99	27
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Micro Machines 69: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2069	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 69	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 69	NewKidCo	99	27
Micro Machines 70: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2070	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 70	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 70	NewKidCo	99	27
Micro Machines 71: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2071	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 71	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 71	NewKidCo	99	27
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Micro Machines 75: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2075	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 75	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 75	NewKidCo	99	27
Micro Machines 76: The Turbo Chase	Midway	99	35	NHL 2076	EA Sports	99	38	Sally's Frenzy 76	Square EA	99	41	TYGA 76	NewKidCo	99	27
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computer entertainment system



5 different drivers, each with a unique big rig and a nasty attitude



Enough 'n rambling Arcade Mode and tons of twisted trucker mini-games

EIGHTEEN

18 WHEELER

WHEELER

☆☆☆ AMERICAN PRO TRUCKER ☆☆☆



2-player, split-screen "Versus Mode," featuring 4 different raceways



PlayStation 2

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EXPERT GAMER

Special thanks to Expert Gamer for providing tricks and strategy materials.

Tricks, tricks and more tricks. That's what we want from you. This month we were pleasing lambasted by tons of GT3 info, and we're expecting more. So, if you've got a tip, a cheat or a code, title the e-mail, Top Secrets, and send it to: OPM@ziffdavis.com. Otherwise, shout into the night air. We'll hear you.

TRICKS FROM THE 10 BEST-SELLING PS2 GAMES

1 GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC

Cheating PS2's No. 1 Driver
Easy horsepower boost

Forget that 3,000 miles business, after you finish each race change the oil. It will boost the horsepower by at least 10, but as much as 50. Plus, it only costs 250 credits.

Easy money

1. Go to Super Speedway in the Beginner League and keep racing the same level for easy money
2. Go to the Beginner League and race in NA to get 5,000 credits.
3. If you have a good car, go to the Amateur League and race in NA for 10,000 credits
4. If you have a very good car, go to the Amateur League and race in GT All-Stars in the test course to get 25,000 credits. Note: Buy the cheapest tires. They last longer
5. Get a fast car and race the Speedway in the Final Series Race in the Beginner League to win 10,000 credits.

2 NCAA FOOTBALL 2002

Players' names

The players in the game are modeled after actual players, and the programmers included most of their names if you take the time to enter them. Even Tennessee's tight end, John Finlayson is there. To hear the announcers call your players' names instead

of their numbers, simply change their names in the options menu. Select "Roster" then "Edit Player Information." Collegiate rosters can be found on ESPN.com. Not all names will be recognized, but it'll spice up the experience

Touchdown celebrations

Hold one of the following buttons immediately before scoring a touchdown at the risk of an unsportsman-like conduct penalty
Point upward: Press L1 or R1.
Shake football: Press L2.
Hold up football: Press R2.

GRAN TURISMO™ 3

OPM readers chime in with their own tips and tricks for GT3 glory

First cars first

Don't buy the Miata first off. Instead, go get the Toyota Trueno. It may be a piece, but it's thousands less and has more horsepower than the Miata. When you buy the Trueno, all you have to do is win at the Super Speedway, and you'll be able to snag a turbo-charger which will make it twice as easy to win the Sunday Cup. When you win the Sunday, you'll get another Trueno. Just sell it for more cash and go win the Clubman Cup. Travis Hawkes
travis@kwom.com

How to win a GT3 multiplayer race after eating a huge hamburger

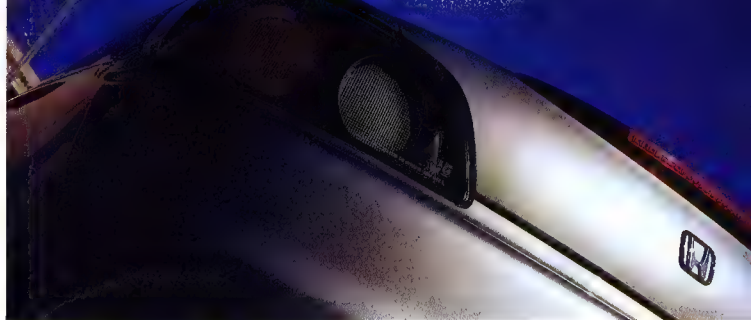
It helps to have a large carbonated beverage handy, and experience in the Belching arts. To perform this trick, simply wait until a crucial point in the race. Then, unleash a belch of large proportions in your opponent's face. In the brief moment when he closes his eyes in disgust ram him into a wall! You should have no problem winning then. Philip Nova
philipnova@aol.com

Rally Racing to Victory

To complete the rally division I used the Lancer Rally car I won in the Lancer races. I purchased the larger of the two turbos, which made the car quick enough to win any race, but it had a tendency to spin on tight corners. By adjusting the front differential to be stronger than the rear, and by tapping the accelerator in tight turns I was able to sweep the Rally Races. For wet races I purchased the softest tires and changed the final gear ratio to suit the track.

Scott Farmer

White777s@aol.com



3 NBA STREET

Unlock hidden teams

Big Team [SSX Snowboarders]
Get 10 wins in any mode to unlock the Big [SSX Snowboarders] team.
3LW team
Get 20 wins in any mode to unlock the 3LW team
NYC Legends team
Get 30 wins in any mode to unlock the NYC Legends team.
Street Legends team
Win the City Circuit tournament to unlock all the players on the Street Legends team. This team includes

Biggs, Bonafide, Drake, DJ, Takashi, Stretch, and Michael Jordan

Dream Team

Win the court mode to unlock a team that includes Graylien, Alien, Magma Man, and Yeti Snowman.

4 GUNDAM: JOURNEY TO JABURO

When playing mission 2 in story mode, shoot down at least five of the Dopps that try to shoot down White Base. To make this easier, jump up on to White Base and shoot down the Dopps as they fly toward you. Once

The coolest GT3 trick known to man

Well, this isn't exactly a shortcut, or a cheat that can help you progress in GT3. What it is, however, is the fruit of hours and hours of labor, and probably the coolest thing I've seen in GT3 so far: a Suzuki Escudo tearing up the test course at almost 900 mph. On its hind wheels! If you haven't seen this yet, you haven't lived.

First, you'll need a Suzuki Escudo Pikes Peak Version with all available upgrades and modifications, including a stage 4 turbo kit and super-soft racing tires. Go into the vehicle settings and make the following adjustments (be sure to save the default settings beforehand):

Tires:

Racing Super Soft front and rear.

Suspension:

Spring Rate: 4.0 front/4.0 rear

Ride Height: 75 front/75 rear

Shock Bound/Rebound: Level 7 all around

Camber/Toe Angles: All at 0

Stabilizers: Both at Level 4

Brakes:

Brake Balance: L9 front/L9 rear

Drivetrain:

Limited-Slip: Bring all Limited-Slip differentials down to 0.

Gear Ratio: Bring the auto setting to level 48; then bring the final gear to 3.012; finally, set the individual gears as low [i.e., as far to the left] as possible. You should be left with:

1st 4.604

2nd 2.888

3rd 2.014

4th 1.485

5th 1.157

6th 0.875

7th 0.612

FIN 3.012

Other:

Downforce: 0.35 front/1.08 rear

ASM: 0

TCS: 0

VCD: 10%

When you start the Max Speed Test, turn the car around and circle the track in the other direction. Once around simply isn't enough to build up the speed you're looking for. Going the opposite way means that the test will not end until you exit it yourself (don't worry, it will still save your speed records). Be forewarned that the car will turn very poorly, so line yourself up properly on the straightaways.

Be careful not to piss yourself, because this car builds up some SERIOUS speed (my current record is 891.3 mph). Your front tires should begin lifting off the ground at about 225 mph, at which point you will quickly begin gaining tremendous speed. You might want to wear a diaper or something. The camera stays behind the car, so you'll get a weird angle during the wheeler...it's best viewed from one of the fancy replay modes.

And that's all there is to it...make sure you keep it clean and change its oil after every test.

John Damiani

Toronto, ON

john_damiani@hotmail.com



Quick turnover on the speedy rides

Once you have a decent car with around 500 HP (Mustang STV Cobra, Lancer Evo, etc.) and an A license, go to the Amateur league American Championship. It shouldn't be too hard to win the first four races. After the fourth race, save your game, and exit the next race. You should win and have about \$50K overall. Now, if you don't get the Camaro Race Car for your prize, then load your saved game and try again. Once you get it, you can either sell it for \$250K, or keep it. I suggest keeping your first one and selling the others you win. The Camaro is a great car that gets to around 950 HP. Get it totally upgraded and you will be able to win the American Championship with ease.

Nick Stauder

kenh@mcrcs.com

Choose your own tunes

I have a tip for the races that take forever to complete. Go grab your discman, pop in your favorite CD, and race while listening to your own CDs. The time seems to go by quicker and who knows, you may even drive better. Especially for tracks that have you take a bunch of left turns.

Kevin Irish

IrishSteel36@aol.com

The ol' memory card switcharoo

The easiest way to get fast cash in GT3 takes a little work at first. I purchased a Toyota Sprinter and put as many racing mods as the remaining \$6K+ allowed. I then saved my game and turned the console off. I pulled out my memory card and started all over. Then I started the game in Simulation Mode with the allotted \$18K. I put the memory card back into slot two and went to the garage and selected the Trade option. This option will transfer car info from slot two to slot one. The game then asked if I wanted to buy the car on that file. I selected "yes" and I bought the car for the original list price, but the racing mods were already installed. Kind of like getting free parts from the dealer. This will give you a leg up on the competition.

Troy Thorpe

troythorpe@hotmail.com

you have accomplished this, and the level progresses, instead of flying in by red Dopp, Gamma will be in his Zaku. Defeat him and successfully complete the rest of the mission to unlock this mobile suit in the gallery. If you have all the Zeon suits unlocked in the tactics battle mode already, then just finish a level to unlock this suit in the tactics battle mode. If not, just progress through tactics battle mode as usual.

5 TWISTED METAL: BLACK

Unlock some of the key players

Play as Yellow Jacket

At the Junkyard level, shoot down the airplane that circles the level with a homing or fire missile while no enemy is around you. The plane will catch on fire, circle and crash into a wall in the lowest area of the level that leads to an underground tunnel. Follow the tunnel under the sewers, collect the weapons and health, and continue until you see a control panel attached to a large column in the middle of a circular room. Shoot the control panel and a message stating Yellow Jacket has been unlocked will appear. Yellow Jacket will appear inside the destroyed column.

Play as Warthog

At the Suburbs level, go to the entrance to the carnival. Turn left and jump off a hill to land on top of a building with a structure on top of it. Blow up the structure to reveal a hole in the building. Fall through the hole and destroy the panel. A message stating Warthog has been unlocked will appear.

Play as Axel

At the Freeway level, go toward the center of the level to find a large construction site with two big cranes. The one on the right is holding a pipe, the one on the left is holding a crate. Use the ridge between the cranes and

the road to aim yourself at the control box of the left crane (at the center box). You only need to hit it once with some kind of missile. The crate will then lower into the construction yard. Shoot it to unlock Axel.

6 EXTERMINATION

A pair of extra modes

Play in Expert mode

Successfully complete the game after finding all 15 dog tags and save. Start another game with the yellow "Rear Of Compound" save file (00:00:00 time). The game will begin with extra ammunition (500 bullets, 50 shotgun shells, 30 grenade rounds, 1,000 flame



twisted metal: BLACK

Last month we gave you a good overview of the weapons and some general tips on how to stay alive in Calypso's car-combat tournament. This month we'll get into some of the more nitty

and grittier means of survival in a few of the earlier levels in the game. Next month we'll finish up with the rest of the levels as well as special tips on how to defeat the bosses!

Zoo Bros. Shoot & Salvage



From the tunnel's entrance, you'll be perfectly safe.

SHOOTING THE PLANE

An airplane constantly circles this level, and by shooting it down, you can open up a massive hidden area. To get the best



shot at the plane, aim yourself with the Homing Missiles and park on the ledge that

THE STATUE

overlooks the gully. When the plane flies overhead, blast away.

There is a goofy statue that hangs over part of this level. If you shoot it up with two Gas Cans, a segment of it will fall into the giant crusher, forming a make-shift ramp. Build up some speed and time your jump off the ramp so that you land on the giant crusher, allowing you to raise. This is the highest part of the tower.



As with a lot of levels in TMB, your best bet with this one is to simply find an out-of-the-way place and pick off cars individually. Avoid areas that are congested, such as beneath the crumbling overpass, as it's easy to fall into a trap of two or more cars. One good spot to take haven is in the suspended plane, where you can grab a health power-up and fire down on enemies below. Another is a tunnel that is opened up when you shoot down the plane. Weapons will respawn inside, and if you stay about 50 feet back

Midtown Suburbs

This level is quite large and spread out, which can work in your favor. Simply stay to the outskirts and wait for your

rival cars to seek you out and you'll have a better chance of not getting ripped apart. Since it can take a while for healthy power-ups to respawn, cooling off in the middle of nowhere can buy you some time. As much fun as it can be, it's usually best to stay out of the town area, as that's where most of the cars will congregate. One good spot to take out enemies is found in the town, though. Jump to the top of the A&L Transportation Building and then from there jump to other buildings in the town. You'll find lots of power-ups and you'll also be able to take out enemies below with homing weapons.

FERRIS WHEEL

Have you ever wanted to chuck Ferris Wheel from its rooftop? Well, now you can. Simply jump up and watch it smash through your town. Now you can live out this fantasy vicari-

ously through TMB! Simply fire away at it and watch it roll, taking out any cars in its path!

SANCTUARY LIES WITHIN

At the edge of the town you will find a fairly large church. If you shoot the front or back of this structure, you will be able to hide inside and collect a nice Health Power-Up. And if you don't shoot through both walls, you can also use the church as a hiding spot.



SPECIAL CUBE

ITEM: Unlock the Prison Level. Jump to the top of the long narrow building in the factory district and shoot the vent that is closest to the rear of the building. Black Cube.

MIDTOWN EXPRESS 104

Although it encompasses a wide variety of terrain, this level doesn't offer many good



places to hide, making mobility the key to staying alive. Keep moving, and avoid the area immediately below the massive bridge where the trains pass, as it will get congested with cars. Overall, the State Hospital offers the most sanctuary from conflict, but watch out when you jump into it—you are the far to the right, you'll slide. Also, the Stadium area is great for fast cars such as Spectre.

DERAIL THE TRAIN

Show off your wicked side by

Environment Weapon

Call In the Fire Support

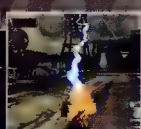
The Bomber in this level will fire its gun at any car that drives within its range. This attack will fire 18 potential shots, and these can whittle down almost any car with ease. When you trigger it, though, make sure you're not the closest car to the Bomber, or else you might end up getting pegged!



Environment Weapon

Lightning Storm

If anyone is camping in the factory district, a quick jolt of lightning from the Environment Weapon of this stage will make them rethink their plans.



units and 25 Ultimate Launcher missiles) and extra health items (20 Recovery Unit A, 5 Recovery Unit B, 5 MTS Vaccine, 5 Booster Shot A and 3 Booster Shot B). However, enemies will be more difficult

Secret mode

Successfully complete the game after finding all 15 dog tags and Roger's knife. After the credits, and the candy girl song, you can save. When you do save the game, the save file will be yellow and have a star next to it. When you load this saved game file, you will begin with 300 bullets, 50 shotgun shells, 99 grenade shells, 1,000

flamethrower capacity and 25 missiles. You will also start out with an AT-6 Grenade Launcher. This has a six chamber revolving unit that you can use. You also get 25 recovery unit type A, 5 type B, 5 MTS vaccines, 5 booster shot type A, and 3 booster shot type B. However, the enemies take double the hits to kill in this mode

7 MX 2002

FEATURING RICKY CARMICHAEL

More tricks to win the fans' hearts

Pendulum: Press Square, Circle
Rocket Air: Press X, Circle
Rodeo Air: Press Triangle, X

Saran Wrap: Press Triangle, Square.
Seat Grab: Press X|Z
Suicide Flip: Hold Analog-stick Up until you have done a complete flip.
Superman Indian: Press X|3.
Switchblade: Press Square, X

10 TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

Super charger

While fighting with any character, press all buttons to do a super charger.

Automatic lower parry

While fighting with any character, press Down/Forward to do a lower parry

Escape backflip

While fighting with most characters, press Up/Back to do an escape backflip.

Bonus characters

Successfully complete arcade mode with any character to unlock one of the hidden characters. Another character will be unlocked each time the game is completed, in the following order: Kunimitsu, Bruce Irvin, Jack-2, Lee Chaolan, Wang Jinrey, Roger & Alex, Kuma & Panda, Kazuya Mishima, Ogre, True Ogre, Prototype Jack, Mokujin & Tetsujin, Devil & Angel, and Unknown.

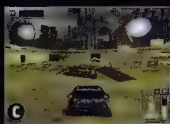


and any train that tries to cross will derail in a glorious display of carnage. Other than looking cool, this doesn't really serve any purpose though.

RACE RUMBLE

There is a stadium in the back section of this level where go-karts are racing. Although the wide open spaces may deter you from this area, you will find a Repair Station in the

middle of the course. The cars racing around can make things interesting, though; they'll also attract homing missiles.



lobbing a gas can at the bridge that the trains continually pass over. If your aim is true, the bridge will collapse.

Black Vista Highway

This is another level that requires you to constantly keep on the move, as there are few spots that you can safely take refuge in. Your best bet is to play the level like a jackal—find cars that are the most damaged and hunt them down. The section that you'll probably want to avoid most is around the repair station, as most of the cars are drawn to this point.

THE BIG IDEA

Near the chemical plant you will find a partially raised drawbridge. Floating over the gap in the bridge is a skull weapon and two health power-ups. However, make sure you are going fast enough over it, as falling off the bridge will mean instant death.



BOAT WORK NEEDED

A section of the roadway has been completely destroyed, leaving a gaping hole in the road. Unlike the bridge, falling through the gap will not get you



killed. In fact, if you are daring enough to fall through, you will find a health power-up that is sure to be needed. The passage that leads to a slower section of the road also has a section health power-up in it.



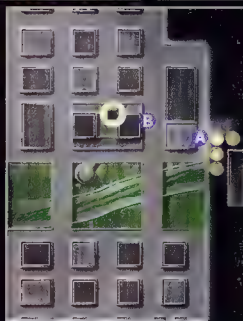
SPECIAL CUBE ITEM: You will find this secret Cube in the hidden chamber that is created by exploding the chemical storage ball. The hard part of this is getting the ball to hit the target before the other cars blow it up. You can increase your chance of success by waiting until there is only one enemy car left.

Downtown Business District

A remake of the classic Twisted Metal stage, the Business District is one of the easier levels in the game, as the enemy cars are always spread thin. You can use the open city streets as an advantage by freezing any enemies who chase after you. As soon as you see an enemy on your radar moving onto your street, you can trigger your attack so you can freeze your opponent without taking any hits in return. A good spot to hide in this level is the catwalk atop the Skyway Tower. From here you can easily fire down below, and few enemy weapons can reach you that high.

LEVEL THE BUILDING

Lob gas cans onto the giant chemical orbs that are connected to the chemical factory. One of them is bound to tumble out into the street and completely level the building behind the bank. Aside from being one of the coolest effects in the game, you will also be able to pick up a number of power missiles by doing this.



The Skyway Tower and the building across from it have sections of wall that you can break through. Inside, you will find an elevator that leads to an area on the second floor of the buildings. Since you will most likely be too busy trying not to get killed, you will quite possibly miss this section of the level (it takes a few missiles to destroy the wall).



SPECIAL CUBE ITEM: Unlock the Stadium level—Look behind a sign for the Black Cube. You will need to drop down onto the right hallway that rings the easternmost building with the elevator. Because it is transparent, this Cube can be easily missed. You'll have to use your jumping ability to reach it.



Environment Weapon

Death from Above

Calypso's helicopters fly above every stage. However, in this level the ones flying over the center divide can be triggered to attack the cars closest to the bridge.

TRICKS FROM THE 10 BEST-SELLING PS ONE GAMES

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS

Instantly kill undead

To instantly kill an undead (ghouls, skeletons, etc.), simply throw them a Phoenix Down. You will never miss and they'll die instantly! Note: When you kill undead this way a timer will appear. If you don't finish the game before the timer reaches 0 the undead will rise again.

Obtain strong weapons

Enter the Deep Dungeon to explore around the Deep Dungeon and fight random battles. After awhile a battle with a few male ninjas and one female ninja will begin. The ability catch on all of your characters must be present. Kill all of the male ninjas during the beginning of the battle. Then, wait until the female ninja throws a weapon (Chaos blade, Nagra rock, etc.). Since you have the catch ability on, the weapons will be yours.

GRAN TURISMO 2

Kiddle Medal

The small green and yellow object on the

status screen under licenses is a license award given if you miss the bronze medal by 3 to .5 seconds. The game is selective when awarding the medal and it may take several attempts to earn one.

Motor Sports Land track

Obtain all of the licenses, including the Super License, and the Motor Sports Land track will become available in time trial mode on the arcade disc.

SPYRO: YEAR OF THE DRAGON

Extra lives

It's important to note that this code may only

be used if you are in the first land and have not moved to another land. The best time to enable it is at the start of the game. Pause the game and press R2, L2, R2, L2, Up, Up, Up, Circle.

Extra hit points

Pause the game and press Circle, R1, Circle, L1, Circle, R2, Circle, L2, Circle. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a sound.

FINAL FANTASY CHRONICLES

Skipping the Sealed Cave (FF 4)

When you go to the Underworld and go to



Ico, without a doubt, is a thinking man's game. Whenever you're stuck, try remembering two steps behind, not two steps ahead. Keep in mind that anything you see might very well be the key to conquering that level. Maybe you should push a box or maybe you should drop off of that sketchy ledge. Once all of your possibilities are exhausted, remember that going to past rooms might, too, be the key. Ico's a complex game, fantastically designed. Don't outthink yourself. Sometimes the answer is so simple you'll slap your forehead in awe.

Stickin' it to the Ghosts

Defending Yorda is your number-one priority. When you start to see a swirl of inky black swirling on the ground, or if you hear the music change, you best get medieval on some ghostly creatures. There are some tough beasts, so just swing away. Also, don't worry yourself over the spiders that scatter when you near them. They can't pull Yorda away from you. But they do obstruct her movement, so you may need to pull her away by hand.



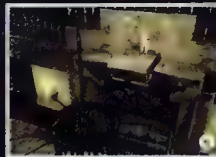
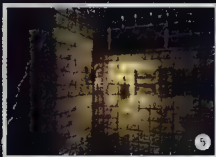
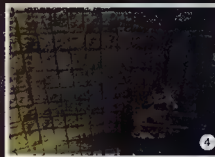
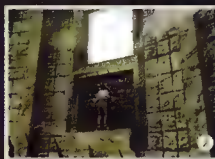
Valis

When you're stuck in a room, try remembering two steps behind, not two steps ahead. Keep in mind that anything you see might very well be the key to conquering that level. Maybe you should push a box or maybe you should drop off of that sketchy ledge. Once all of your possibilities are exhausted, remember that going to past rooms might, too, be the key. Ico's a complex game, fantastically designed. Don't outthink yourself. Sometimes the answer is so simple you'll slap your forehead in awe.



FREEING YORDA

Freeing Yorda is the trigger that makes Ico an irresistible game. When you get into the room with the wide stone circle in the center, take the ladder to the right. Then walk up the circling stairwell until you're stalled by the gap of broken space. Climb up the window to your right, then, once outside, back in through the window on your far right. Then pull the lever to lower the cage with Yorda inside. Walk to the bottom, take the ladder to the left of the entrance. Climb to the center, then leap onto the cage to break it free. Now, pick up the stick, ward off the inky bad guys, and pull Yorda to the door.



the Dwarf Kingdom, after you have to fight the dolls in the secret crystal chamber, Rydia returns and helps you fight. After you are done and back in the main chamber, use her warp spell to get back to the crystal room. The crystal will still be there. Approach and examine the crystal to take it. Later when you have to go to the Sealed Cave, if you have the Crystal, you will not have to enter it. You can skip that event and automatically go to the sequence that normally happens as you are coming out.

Tackling the Four Fiends (FF4)

To defeat the Four Fiends easily, use their

weaknesses. For Milton, keep using Fire spells and attack. When he dies, he will return as Milton Z. Use Fire, Cure and attacks to defeat him easily. For Cagnazzo, use about two Bolt 3s and he should die, depending on your level. For Valvalis, have Kain jump and make her come out of her tornado form. Keep attacking her from there. For Rubicante, use Ice 3 only when his cape is open or else it will cure him. Have Edge throw swords, have Kain jump, and the rest attack. Note this strategy also works when you have to fight the Four Fiends again when in the Giant, only Rubicante never closes his cape.

5 TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

Unlock the Hawk

Unlock all hidden characters

Pause the game, then hold L1 and press Square, Circle, Right, Triangle, Circle, Right, Circle, Triangle, Right, Square, Right, Up, Up, Left, Up, Square. The screen will shake.

All gaps and Private Carrera

Pause the game, then hold L1 and press Down, Up, Left[2], Circle, Left, Up, Triangle[2], Up, Right, Square[2], Up, X. The pause screen will shake.

Special meter always full

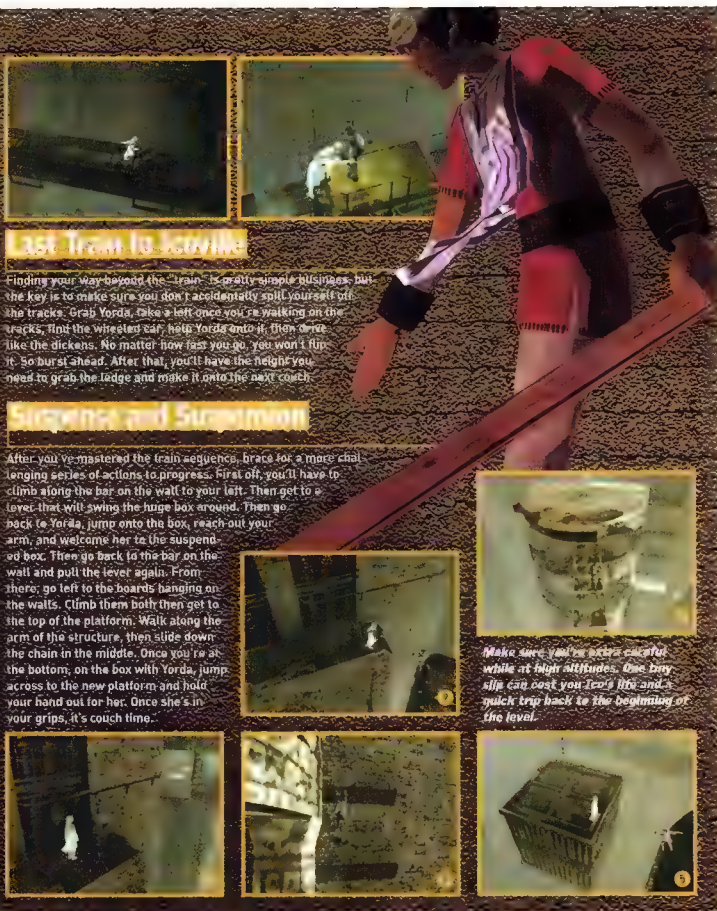
Pause the game, then hold L1 and press X, Triangle, Circle[2], Up, Left, Triangle, Square to always have a full special meter. If you entered the code correctly, the pause screen will shake. Alternately, successfully complete the game by completing all level objectives in career mode five times.

7 TEKKEN 3

Opening up a classic

Play as Doctor Boskonovitch

Complete Tekken Force Mode four times (collect the bronze, silver, gold keys, then complete that mode one final time). Then,



LAST TRAIN TO SCOTLAND

Finding your way beyond the "train" is pretty simple business, but the key is to make sure you don't accidentally spill yourself off the tracks. Grab Yorda, take a left once you're walking on the tracks, find the wirestrapped car, help Yorda onto it, then drive like the dickens. No matter how fast you go, you won't flip, it'll go burst ahead. After that, you'll have the height you need to grab the ledge and make it onto the next couch.

SUSPENSE AND SURPRISE

After you've mastered the train sequence, brace for a more challenging series of actions to progress. First off, you'll have to climb along the bar on the wall to your left. Then get to a lever that will swing the huge box around. Then go back to Yorda, jump onto the box, reach out your arm, and welcome her to the suspended box. Then go back to the bar on the wall and pull the lever again. From there, go left to the boards hanging on the walls. Climb them both then get to the top of the platform. Walk along the arm of the structure, then slide down the chain in the middle. Once you're at the bottom, on the box with Yorda, jump across to the new platform and hold your hand out for her. Once she's in your grips, it's couch time.



Make sure you're extra careful while at high altitudes. One tiny slip can cost you Leo's life and a quick trip back to the beginning of the level.



defeat Doctor Boskonovitch when he appears to have him available on the character selection screen under arcade mode.

8. SYMPHON FILTER 2

D.C. City Park multiplayer stage

Find the dirty laundry in the New York City Slums District level in one of the washing machines in the first Sniper Building of the level. This is the building that is similar to the slums district level in multiplayer mode.

Disco Underground multiplayer stage

In the Disco 32 level, after killing the

bodyguard on the catwalk, three more guards will run in the door. Kill all three before they can throw a grenade at you. None of them have flak jackets. When you kick open the doors to the next dance floor with big speakers in the corners, you will need to kill these three guards before the guard above you can throw a grenade. Save your BIZ-2 ammo for him, run to the right, and hide behind the speaker. Kill the two guards on the floor. As the guard above you runs around so he can throw a grenade, use the BIZ-2 for a head shot. He does have a flak jacket.

Jungle multiplayer stage

Kill Archer at the very end of the C-130 Wreck Site level with one shot (head shot). It is recommended that you use the silenced sniper rifle to kill him because of its zooming capabilities.

10. MLB 2002

Super player

Enter "Scott Murray" as a player name at the player creation screen. He can hit 606-foot home runs.

DVD EGGS

Cast Away DVD

Head on over to the second disc and go to Video Stills and Galleries. After that Highlight Raft Escape. You'll need to push the left arrow button and you shall see angel wings as seen on the Fed-Ex box. Next step: discovering what's inside. Fun for the whole family.



Snatch DVD

Here's a few sweet eggs from a very cool flick. On disc two of the U.S. release of *Snatch*, director Guy Ritchie talks about a few of the actors in *Snatch* and he chats about his previous movie: *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*. Here's what you'll

need to do: On disc two: highlight the arrow next to "Special Features." When the selections change, go to filmographies. Enter Guy Ritchie's filmography and press Up and Left to find a hidden No. 1 surrounded by a diamond. Press enter to see Guy Ritchie discuss *Snatch* and *LS&TSB*.

But wait! There's more. Enter Brad Pitt's filmography and press Up and then Right to find the same symbol as before. Ritchie will talk about Pitt.

And more? We're *BPM*, aren't we? Just do the same as above to get to Vinnie Jones', except press Up twice.

Hannibal DVD

If you're in the mood for a flash-frame music video, you'll need a copy of this less-than-stellar sequel. First, pop in disc two and go to the "Breaking the Silence" behind-the-scenes. There are five behind-the-scenes segments in this area. Highlight "Music" and hit Left on your remote and two arrows will be highlighted. Click Enter to be taken to a page that explains what "Flash Frames" are and a music video (entitled "Clarice") made up of lots of flash frames.

Logan's Run DVD

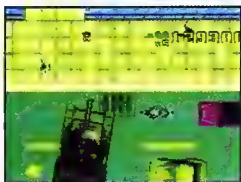
On the main menu there is a picture of a hand with a crystal in the center of it. Pressing the Right arrow key will highlight it. Press Enter. This will take you to a screen which explains the different colored crystals.

Requiem for a Dream DVD

This is a movie you must see. But owning the DVD seems a bit creepy to us. We couldn't stomach it more than once. Anyway, if you're that big of an Aronofsky fan, here's a way to discover a sweet egg. First, go to the Chapter Selection section. Go to the video cassette spine labeled "Chapters 21-24." Press Up twice, then press Enter. You can now see a hidden bit from Tappy Tibbons' infomercial where he explains what his secret #3 is (if you notice, it's never said in the film). Just so you know, this egg was obtained by calling the Tappy Tibbons phone number, 1-900-976-JUICE. So don't call and get charged money to find out the above.



THE GRAND THEFT AUTO SERIES



1 GRAND THEFT AUTO (THE ORIGINAL)

Multiple Cheats

Enter the following cheats for a player name and you'll get a load of goodies:

BASTARD: 99 lives, 5x multiplier, all weapons, armor, display coordinates, select level, unlimited ammunition and a Get Out of Jail Free card.

GROOVY: all armor, unlimited ammunition and a Get Out of Jail Free card.

HANGTHEDJ: all cities and weapons, lots of money and a parrot picture at the character selection screen.

PECKINPAH: all weapons and armor and a Get Out of Jail Free card.

THESHI: 99 lives, 5x multiplier, all weapons and armor, select level, unlimited ammunition and a Get Out of Jail Free card.

Other great stuff from the original Car Bomb

When you start out on a level, steal a car, but don't pick a big one or else the trick will be harder. Then keep searching for a garage door kinda thing that has an X coming out from it. Enter that place and your car will be rigged or in other words, bombed. Then stop the car somewhere and press the fire button. Your car will be armed, so get out of it within about five seconds or you will blow up! This trick is useful for jobs, killing and collecting money. (Keep in mind, you must have \$5,000 or you will not be able to get your car rigged.)

Easy Ambulance

To get the Ambulance, kill somebody by running them over or shooting them. Then hide and wait for the ambulance to come and hijack it. Watch out for the cops, as they will be all over you for killing someone. Turn on the sirens by pushing the R2 button. Hold it down and it will make a different sound.

Easy Guranga

Go up to a group of Gurangas (the group of people making noise and running around following each other). Now, don't shoot them, but instead beat up the person in the front. If you beat him up enough, they will start following you almost anywhere. It's a good way to get a guranga with a machine gun,

flamethrower, or other high-powered weapon of death.

Maximum Wanted Level

Enter EATTHIS as a player name to set Wanted level to four.

2 GRAND THEFT AUTO 2

5x multiplier

Use HIGHFIVE as a player name.

All Weapons

Use NAVARONE as a player name.

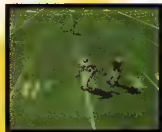
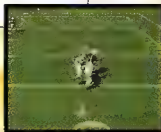
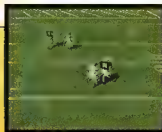
Free money

Steal a taxi and pick up people. They'll pay about \$5 per second. But they don't



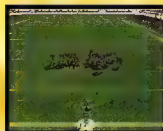
Breaking Up the Long Ball

Every team is susceptible to the occasional long-ball. And when it happens, it sucks. Don't be a victim. The trick to covering the deep pass is taking control of the defensive back and using the d-back's closing speed to ruin an opportunity. As soon as the pass is in the air, switch to the d-back and hold Circle. This will speed burst you into position. Then, when the pass is very close to being caught, hold down Triangle. If your timing is good, you may even pick it.



The Real Punt Return

We don't know if EA Sports is ever going to get punt coverage right, but we know a little trick that will spring you for an easy 15-20 yards on a punt return if you're interested. The trick: Take the Punt Block formation. You'll have loads of space as a returner, after you immediately cut left or right upon catching the ball. One problem: If the offense is faking, you could be in serious trouble.



Staying Cool During the Option

Running the option in college football is as important as Elvis' ghost keeping up the pompadour. The trick is knowing when to hold it and when to give it up. That you'll learn over time, but we've got a tip for basic execution. When you snap the ball with the QB, don't take one

step backward. Always stay parallel with the line of scrimmage. That way, if you want to flip the ball, you're in good position. And if you want to cut upfield into a gaping hole, you're set. Otherwise, you give away a precious second by stepping back. And that can ruin you.



always get in. They pay you until you drive recklessly or if you're chased by cops.

Level Select

To choose your starting level, enter your

name as ITSALLUP.

Maximum Wanted level

Enter DESIRES to set Wanted level to four.

No police

Enter LOSEFEDS as a player name

Tune car radio

Press Up to change the radio stations.

Turbo Charge

When starting a game, enter your name as IGNITION to make every car in the game turbo charged.

Unlimited Energy

Enter LIVELONG as a player name.

Unlimited Money

DARK CLOUD

Just because you asked for it—the full weapon evolution lists for our two favorite Dark Cloud characters. We aim to please! Speaking of which, plenty of you showed your displeasure at our comment about the uselessness of both Osmond and the fishing minigame. OK, we'll admit it—we were being a bit over the top, but your points are certainly valid. Below are two letters summing up your thoughts on this matter. Got any more Dark Cloud comments? Send 'em to us at opm@ziffdavis.com.

Go Fish

I agree that the fishing game is pretty pointless, but there is one trick all players should know. In the Matatad Village, go to the fishing area at night. If you bait your hook with a Poisonous Apple (and are kinda patient), you will hook a decent-sized fish called a Mardan Garayan. This fish gives good fish points, but it does something better. Any time from that point on, when you encounter a large treasure chest, you won't have to take the risk of being inadvertently poisoned or damaged by an explosion. A screen will come up saying, "Mardan Garayan shows the way," and the correct choice will be highlighted in red.

Eddie Moore
dsayers@gte.net

As other readers also pointed out, you can use your Fishing Points to buy a special sword for Toan that can only be powered up by catching more Mardan Garayan fish. You should also try the Poisonous apple in other towns after dusk, as the Mardan Garayan has been known to show up throughout Dark Cloud's world.

Don't Diss Osmond!

Osmond is definitely worth the effort. His two best guns are way better than Ruby's rings; one does major damage and the other has a speed on it that won't let any enemy up!

Matt Marcell
troll_child@yahoo.com

Even better, we found out from all you readers that Osmond is especially powerful thanks to his unique ability in the game to strafe with his gun weapons.



TOAN'S WEAPON EVOLUTION

SUN SWORD — Big Bang — Sword of Zeus

BONE RAPIER — Evilcise — Drain Seeker — Dark Cloud — 7th Heaven

WISE OWL SWORD — Lamb's Sword — Atlamilia Sword — Chronicle Sword

MACHO SWORD — Aga's Sword — Atlamilia Sword — Chronicle Sword
— Cross Hinder — Big Bang — Sword of Zeus

BUSTER SWORD — Claymore — Cross Hinder — Big Bang — Sword of Zeus

KITCHEN KNIFE — Chopper — Choor — Heaven's Cloud — Dark Cloud — 7th Heaven
— Sex — Dusack — Maneater — Atlamilia Sword — Chronicle Sword
— Brave Ark — Dark Cloud — 7th Heaven
— Branch Sword — Atlamilia Sword — Chronicle Sword

SERPENT SWORD — Evilcise — Drain Seeker — Dark Cloud — 7th Heaven
— Tsukikage — Heaven's Cloud — Dark Cloud

CRYSTAL KNIFE — Small Sword — Tsukikage — Heaven's Cloud — Dark Cloud — 7th Heaven
— Sand Breaker — Antique Sword — Brave Ark — Dark Cloud

BASELARD — Shamshir — Sex — Dusack — Brave Ark — Dark Cloud — 7th Heaven
— 7 Branch Sword — Atlamilia Sword — Chronicle Sword

GRADIUS — Small Sword — Tsukikage — Heaven's Cloud — Dark Cloud — 7th Heaven
— Chopper — Choor — Maneater — Atlamilia Sword — Chronicle Sword
— Brave Ark — Dark Cloud — 7th Heaven
— Dusack — 7 Branch Sword — Atlamilia Sword — Chronicle Sword

RUBY'S WEAPON EVOLUTION

PLATINUM RING & THORN ARMLET — Crystal Ring — Goddess Ring — Athena's Armlet — Secret Armlet
— Fairy's Ring — Destruction Ring — Mobius Ring

— Crystal Ring — Goddess Ring — Athena's Armlet — Secret Armlet
— Satan's Ring — Mobius Ring

BANDIT'S RING — Pockle — Fairy's Ring — Destruction Ring — Mobius Ring



Enter the name IAMPLAYA and you will have unlimited money.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: LONDON 1969

Multiple Cheats

Just like in the original, it's best to enter these codes as player names if you want to save some cheat code-entering time:

DONTMESS

All weapons and a Get Out Of Jail Free card.

FREEMANS

5x multiplier, all weapons, armor and a Get Out Of Jail Free card.



GETCARTER

99 lives, 5x multiplier, all levels and weapons, armor, display coordinates, maximum Wanted level, and a Get Out Of

Jail Free card.

HAROLDHAND

99 lives, 5x multiplier, all levels and weapons, armor, display coordinates, maximum Wanted level, parrot picture (at the character selection screen), and a Get Out Of Jail Free card. 5x multiplier

Enter SIDEBURN as a player name.

9,999,999 points

Enter BIGBEN as a player name

99 lives

Enter MCVICAR as a player name.

All cities

Enter RAZZLE or READERWIFE as a player name.

Display coordinates

Enter SWEENEY as a player name.

Drive Tank

To drive the Royal Pain Tank with rocket capability, go to coordinates: (39, 10).

London (1 and 2)

Enter MAYFAIR as a player name.

London (1 & 3)

Enter PENTHOUSE as a player name.

Maximum Wanted level

Enter OLDBILL as a player name.

No police

Enter GRASS as a player name

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Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine Contest and Sweepstakes Rules. This contest is open to all legal residents of the United States who are at least 18 years old at the time of registration. The contest begins on the date of publication of this issue and ends on the date of the final drawing. The prize pool consists of all prizes won by registered players. The prize pool is divided into two equal parts. One part is used to purchase prizes for the contest and the other part is used to purchase prizes for the sweepstakes. The contest is open to all legal residents of the United States who are at least 18 years old at the time of registration. The contest begins on the date of publication of this issue and ends on the date of the final drawing. The prize pool consists of all prizes won by registered players. The prize pool is divided into two equal parts. One part is used to purchase prizes for the contest and the other part is used to purchase prizes for the sweepstakes.

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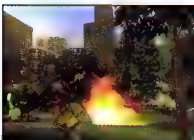
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Metal Gear Solid 2. Easily the most-anticipated game ever. What can we say? It's **Solid Snake in his first PS2 adventure.** Or is it? Could it actually be just a shadow of that once-great agent? And will this be Snake's last hurrah? **Find out what's really happening** in our in-depth, hands-on feature. You know you want



this game—and you know you want this issue to go along with it.

But that's not all! Don't miss our second-ever **PS2 disc**, with playable demos of **NBA Street** and **Kinetica**, video previews of **Final Fantasy X** and **Jak & Daxter**, **PlayStation Underground** stories on **Ico** and **Enroute** (keep your eyes out for Britney Spears!), and much, much more!



Plus! **Batman: Vengeance**, **FIFA 2002**, **Grand Theft Auto III**, **Guilty Gear X**, **Half-Life: Kessel II**, **Okage**, **Syphon Filter 3** and more reviewed, the latest previews, and the coolest tricks and strategies.

Editorial content subject to change

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ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

StrangeCube?

EGM just got back from Japan with the latest word on the world of Nintendo. Want to see something shocking? Check out the strange new directions of the *Zelda*, *Mario* and *Metroid* franchises on the upcoming GameCube. You won't believe your eyes when you see these new screenshots! Plus, see how this winter's PS2 and Xbox wrestling titles compare with each other.



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GAMENOW

GameNOW!

What is *GameNOW*? It's a new magazine featuring multi-console coverage, reviews, previews and all the great tricks and strategy you've come to expect from *Expert Gamer*. For starters, it'll have a huge preview on the PS2's newest RPG, *Okage*. On the Nintendo front, *GameNow* will explore the GameCube's software lineup as the U.S. launch date nears. Plus, more codes and a walk-through of *Ico*.



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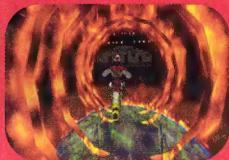
COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

World of Warcraft

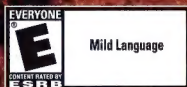
Going head-to-head with *EverQuest* and *Ultima Online*, *World of Warcraft* is a massive-multiplayer RPG set in Blizzard's ever-popular *WarCraft* universe. *CGW* has an exclusive 10-page report, complete with interviews and never-before-seen screenshots. Plus, *Max Payne* reviewed, *Ghost Recon* and *MechWarrior IV* Expansion reviewed, and much more.



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PlayStation 2

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MT. GARRICK, ONCE A PEACEFUL MOUNTAIN RETREAT, IN A STRANGE TURN OF EVENTS, THE SECRETIVE **CHIEF O'LEARY** HAS RECENTLY CLOSED IT OFF TO VISITORS.

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PlayStation.2



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